THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEOLOGY OF WILLIAM MILLIGAN (1821-1893)

by

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Thesis presented for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
of the University of Edinburgh in the
Faculty of Divinity

1 MAY 1970

S U M M A R Y

To follow the development of the theology of William Milligan (1921-1893) is to gain an insight into the Scottish theological world of the nineteenth century and to discern how one man succeeded in making manifest the true centre of theology, its proper scope, and its catholic imperatives.

In the first chapter attention is given to the faculty and curriculum of United College and St. Mary's Divinity Hall at St. Andrews University.

The second chapter consists of a presentation and analysis of William Milligan's Divinity Hall essays. He is seen as a perceptive student who had learned his lessons well, but not without the exercise of his own judgment. Withal Milligan was at that time a convinced devotee of the Common Sense philosophy and its "intuitive" principle of causality.

The third chapter is an exposition of various emphases of the several professors who must have been influential in the earlier development of Milligan's theology. At the University of Edinburgh, where Milligan took his last two years of Divinity, Chalmers dealt with the existence of the various readings of the New Testament and gave encouragement to those wishing to pursue the study of textual criticism. Welsh laid great stress upon the historical approach in theology and made his students aware of the German scene. A year spent in Germany under the influence of Tholuck and Neander enabled Milligan to see the centrality of the risen Lord and the immediacy

of the Spirit communicated through Him. No longer was Milligan to call in the "intuitive" principle of causality.

Because of his great respect for the written Word of God Milligan still had to discover the "settled principles" of the science of textual criticism. The fourth chapter tells of his finding of the required principles in the works of Tregelles and of their application to the texts. This development drew Milligan once again to the central fact of the resurrection of our Lord, who ever draws the seeker to Himself.

In the fifth chapter the process is depicted whereby William Milligan moved in his theology from the fact of the resurrection of Christ to the Fact of His risen, ascended, glorified, and glorifying presence.

The sixth chapter describes how Milligan set forth the Son's Self-offering unto the Father. Our offering is seen to be that which is accomplished through union with the Son in His risen humanity, the union being effected by Holy Spirit -- that is, the Holy Spirit adapted by that very humanity. In the concluding part of the chapter, William Milligan is followed in his insistence on the fact that the Church, being united to her Lord, is to represent Him to the world (through eye gate as well as ear gate) giving her life -- already being offered in the Son unto the Father -- for sake of the world and to the glory of God.

In the seventh and last chapter the development of Milligan's theology is reviewed in the light of its final stage. His influence on his contemporaries is delineated; and his special relevance to the Church's worship, unity, and confession today is shown.

PREFACE

One almost certain index to the scope of any Christian theology is the place it gives to the resurrection of our Lord. Did it really happen "out there" or was it only an objectification, on the part of the early Christian community, of a subjective experience? If it did actually occur, can it rightfully be used in an evidential proof of the truth of Christianity? If not, has it any evidential function? Is it something more than a past event requiring explanation? If so, what is the relationship between the past event and the present reality of, and confrontation with, the One who has been raised? How is the resurrection of Jesus Christ related to His Sonship and to the Trinity? What is the relation between the ascended, glorified Christ and His Church? In what sense does the Church represent her Lord?

These and similar questions were faced by William Milligan in the development of his theology. In its main direction his mature theology is the result of the attempt to answer these questions.

It is the writer's belief that William Milligan helped to bring the central Christian revelation back into focus for the enquiring minds of his day. He was able to do this because of his willing submission to the Holy Spirit testifying through the risen humanity of Christ, by way of the objective evidence, to Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father. Not only that, William Milligan's theology is truly a powerful bid for us to look to the present, risen Lord in such a way that we are constrained to witness to Him and with Him in His everlasting victory of love. Thus is the Son glorified and the Father in the Son.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Whether the development of William Milligan's theology is set forth faithfully is for others to judge. If it falls short of the mark, it is not for the lack of genuine help and encouragement.

My considered advice to those who are contemplating the choice of a thesis subject:

Find a subject whose grandchildren -- outstanding personalities themselves -- are strategically located and are given to gracious hospitality and good will and who are willing for a brash outsider from a rebellious land to use valued family documents and make judgements about their illustrious and truly great ancestor.

Of these grandchildren especially do I want to thank the following:

Miss Joan Hill Stewart, whom the Yanceys can never repay for a multitude of kindnesses -- among them, delicious teas and dinners -- and who even helped with the typing. Nor will we forget the intelligence and twinkling humour of her dear mother, the late Mrs. Ralph Hill Stewart (née Emily Moir Milligan in 1873), whose acquaintance we were privileged to make not very long before she was called to a higher joy.

The Rt. Hon. Lord and Lady Milligan, who in addition to providing an interesting scrapbook of material, opened their home and hearts to the author. His Lordship is the eldest son of the eldest son (George, D.D., D.C.L., former Professor of Biblical Criticism, University of Glasgow, and Moderator of the Church of Scotland) of William Milligan.

The Rt. Rev. Bishop Kenneth M. Carey, the Scottish Episcopal Bishop of Edinburgh, who loaned me his copy of the Memoir of his grandfather, written by his grandmother Milligan. May the Lord continue to bless and encourage his Lordship in his steady pursuit of the ecumenical goal in Scotland, envisioned and eloquently set forth by his grandfather in his moderatorial address.

I wish to acknowledge, too, my indebtedness to the following:

The New College Faculty and Library and secretarial staff for enabling a research student to "get the feel", as well as learn something of the theological background of Scotland and the present theological needs of the world.

My advisors Professor Thomas F. Torrance and the Rev. Robin A.S. Barbour, for much helpful direction and advice.

The staff of the National Library of Scotland, a boon to all research students.

The Library staffs of the University of St. Andrews, the University of Aberdeen, and the University of Edinburgh.

Above all I acknowledge my gratitude:

To my mother for making this study and work possible and for backing me all the way.

To my wife for her love, optimistic encouragement and a thousand assists.

To my daughters for their cheerfulness in being willing to adapt to, and learn from, each new situation.

To many relatives for making numerous adjustments on the Yanceys' behalf.

To all for their patience.

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CHAPTER I

ST. ANDREWS

William Milligan was born in Edinburgh on the fifteenth of March, 1821 --- the first of George and Mary Milligan's seven children.[1] His father was a licentiate of the Church of Scotland, but was at that time engaged in teaching classical Greek and was regarded as a very able scholar. William attended Edinburgh High School, where he became dux of his class. When his father was presented to the parish of Elie in Fife in 1832, William went to school in the adjoining parish of Kilconquhar until he became before his fourteenth birthday a student at the University of St. Andrews in 1835. To enter a university at such an age was not uncommon in that day. Thomas Chalmers had matriculated in the same university in 1792 before his twelfth birthday.

> "It seems an impossibly early age...,; and few of his fellow students were appreciably older. The majority being from twelve to sixteen, the atmosphere of the university was not unlike that of a secondary school of today, though the mere suggestion that they were schoolboys would have roused their fury."[2]

Though away from home at a relatively early age, Milligan was only a few miles away. Nearby was the Christian home in which he

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1. A. Milligan, In Memoriam, William Milligan, D.D., University Press, Aberdeen, 1894, p.2. This memoir contains almost all of the basic biographical material, written by his widow and presented to their eleven children a year after his death; it also includes a complete list of William Milligan's published writings.
   The copy used was very kindly loaned by the Rt. Rev. Bishop K.M. Carey, the present Scottish Episcopal Bishop of Edinburgh, and a grandson of William Milligan.
2. Hugh Watt, Thomas Chalmers and the Disruption, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1943, p. 15.

had been reared by loving parents. We have excerpts from two letters written by William Milligan years later following the death of his parents:

About his father:

> "Long will be the time during which we shall feel the terrible break which has been made in our circle. We were all so dependent upon my father, for though a man of the least demonstrative nature I almost ever knew, his was a most capacious heart, and he held us and all our affairs in it with so close and tender and self-sacrificing a grasp that his whole thoughts were for our comforts, and our happiness gave such a depth of tone to his that it is hardly possible to conceive it equalled. I could not tell you one-thousandth part of the love which he cherished towards the members of his own family."[1]

Of his mother:

> "I, too, well know what a good mother is. The world will never know the tenth part of my mother's sacrifice for her children, as with an income of less than £150 a year, she had to bring up seven. It pains me more than I can express, when I have to think of the struggles that I have seen."[2]

A. United College

William Milligan entered United College St. Andrews University as an advanced student of Greek, undoubtedly reflecting the excellent instruction he had received from his father. He was able from the first to tutor, thus lessening the financial burden at home.

1. The Curriculum and the Faculty

The normal Arts course at that time (1835) was as follows:[3]

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1. op.cit. p. 15.
2. Ibid. pp. 20, 21.
3. Matriculation Roll, St. Andrews University. Curriculum, XXV.

First Session: Latin, Greek
Second Session: Latin, Greek, Mathematics, Logic
Third Session: Latin, Greek, Mathematics, Moral Philosophy
Fourth Session: Latin, Greek, Mathematics, Natural Philosophy.

What strikes us about this course is that more than half of it was a study of the classical languages, which for Milligan's need --- in addition to the instruction he must have already received in them --- was made to order.

Let us now look at some of the professors under whom Milligan studied.

> "The Professor of Greek, Andrew Alexander, was not particularly popular. He was not a great Greek scholar (as his Greek Grammar shows); but to quote the words of a pupil, 'he could teach a great deal more Greek than ninety-nine per cent of the St. Andrews students had time or inclination to learn'"[1]

May we not assume that Milligan was one of those who had the time and the inclination?

James Hunter was the Professor of Logic, Rhetoric, and Metaphysics.

> "The Nineteenth Century, which was to become the most brilliant in the College's philosophical history, began inauspiciously with James Hunter, who occupied the Chair of Logic for forty-one years and who is known only for taking boys as boarders and instructing them in French; a good accent was guaranteed, their preceptor having acquired his own in Paris."[2]

In spite of what is said here, Milligan must have applied himself in the mastering of the formal logic of that day -- i.e., the aristotelian, syllogistic logic.

Though Thomas Chalmers had left St. Andrews in 1827 preparatory

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1. Veterum Laudes, James B. Salmond, editor, Oliver and Boyd, p. 49.
2. op.cit. p. 69.

to becoming Professor of Divinity at the University of Edinburgh, his influence was still felt in many ways. While at St. Andrews he had occupied the Chair of Moral Philosophy. In answer to a question put to him in 1826, concerning the subject matter of his course, he had this to say:

> "I give a course of Natural Theology...I beg leave to state here however, that I consider it as the most important service which a professor of Moral Philosophy can render to his students, to make a palpable demonstration of the insufficiency of Natural Religion...and therefore I advert in the class, towards the conclusion of my course, to the strength of the evidence of Christianity; and I endeavour to make it palpable to them that the Philosophy of a true Baconian mind is that Philosophy which would lead us to cast down all our antecedent conceptions, and sit with the docility of little children at the Bar of an authentic communication from Heaven, provided that its authenticity has been established."[1]

Dr. Thomas Jackson, professor of Natural Philosophy also testified:

> "The processes and results of Astronomy, leading us through a series of successive generalizations, to one pervading and dominant principle, afford a beautiful and instructive exemplification of the Baconian or Inductive Logic."[2]

Again, in answer to the question about the state of preparation he found in the students who came to his class, Dr. Jackson testified:

> "They perhaps attend upon the mathematics one year, and consider that sufficient. It is, however, by no means

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1. Evidence, Oral and Documentary, taken and received by the Commissioners appointed by His Majesty George IV, July 23rd, 1826, and re-appointed by His Majesty William IV, October 12th, 1830, vol. III, p. 78; this was presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of His Majesty. It should be noted that "in the return to the commission of 1840 it was reported that there had been no essential change in the Arts Curriculum described to the Commission of 1826."

2. Ibid. p. 128.

> sufficient for any one that wishes to imbibe the Spirit of the Newtonian Philosophy."[1]

Dr. George Cook was the Professor of Moral Philosophy.

> "[Thomas] Chalmers was probably the greatest man to hold one of our philosophy Chairs, and one of the most inspiring teachers that Scotland has ever known. This is somewhat more than can be said of his successor, George Cook." However, "his lectures suggest that he had more philosophical competence than many of his predecessors, though that is perhaps not to say much, and in any case Cook's chief interest seems to have lain in opposing Chalmers at the General Assembly."[2]

2. Moral Philosophy

We have a fairly clear picture of what was taught in the Moral Philosophy courses, due to the existence of the notebooks of Henry Ramsay and Henry Scott, the latter having entered the University in 1831. These notebooks have provided the basis of an article on the subject of "the University attended a Hundred Years Ago." We are told that:

> "In those days there was no chair of Christian Ethics to make a Professor of Moral Philosophy suspect that he was meant to confine his attentions to paganism, and [Dr. George] Cook continued his work in the General Assembly --- and his opposition to Chalmers --- all the time he held the chair, i.e., until the end of his life in 1845.
>
> In the eighteenth century, up to 1780, the mighty flood of ideas emanating from Hutcheson, Hume, Adam Smith and Reid had made the soul of Scottish philosophy as fruitful as any in Europe; and even into the nineteenth century Dugald Stewart and [Thomas] Brown did what they could with their watering cans to keep the seeds of speculation alive. But by 1830 the ground was dry, very dry, and no period in the history of

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1. Ibid. pp. 125, 126.
2. Veterum Laudes, op.cit. p. 70.

> Scottish Philosophy from 1700 to the present day is so arid as that during which George Cook held his chair. His successor, [James] Ferrier, with the help of waters from Germany, was to turn a desert into a garden once more, but in the meantime Scottish philosophy lacked all originality, and it is to be feared that students in all the universities from 1830-40 were fed solely on 'cauld kail het up again.'"[1]

It may have been that there was nothing of great originality in the Scottish world of philosophy in that day. However, there was an emphasis throughout the teaching of those years --- something of which has already been pointed out --- that was to train William Milligan and provide him with a tool which he learned to use well in his future labours in the field of Scripture criticism and exegesis. This was what has been variously named by the professors already cited the Baconian philosophy, the Newtonian philosophy, the Inductive Philosophy. Let us look at portions of the lectures of Cook and Jackson in order to see this brought out even more clearly:

> "The identity of Ramsay's notes with Scott's suggests that the Professor, having once prepared his course, delivered it from year to year without alteration and thus left himself time for his exertions in the Assembly against Dr. Chalmers."[2]

In the case of Cook we see that there was an alternation of emphasis first upon the strictly empirical approach to facts "out there" in the world and also the attempt to use the inductive method upon the mind itself. Chalmers preferred the former emphasis while

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1. The Alumnus Chronicle, official organ of the Alumnus Association, the University of St. Andrews, No. 25, June, 1939, article 6, "The University a Hundred Years Ago," by R.G.C. and T.M.K. pp. 9, 10.

2. Ibid. p. 10.

Cook used both methods. Cook, therefore, though on the whole a convinced empiricist, believed in the legitimacy of the application of the inductive philosophy to one's own mind; here he followed the common sense school of Reid and Stewart. Cook criticises Plato as one who set forth 'eternal ideas' instead of results based on observation and induction. Scholasticism is said to be made up of "useless and intricate speculations". "Kant's transcendental Philosophy is very much a revival of Platonism and is not adapted to the present state of our faculties."[1]

> "As one would expect from a leader of the moderate party in the Church, Cook held that revelation had not superseded the patient and empirical study of conduct, although the result of that study, in his opinion, illustrated the perfection of Christian morality. If revelation has not superseded ethics, neither in his view has it superseded natural religion, and when he comes to the Second Part of his course he has several opportunities to trounce his distinguished predecessor, Chalmers. 'If Chalmers is right in asserting that by the exercise of our own faculties we can form no notion of God, then the intuitive truth that every effect has a cause is resolved into words without meaning, and the natural state of man is a state of atheism.' From the vigorously empirical outlook of the early lectures to the 'intuitive truth' of Lecture LVII is a long road, and the philosopher would wonder whether if Dr. Cook's original presuppositions be accepted, Dr. Chalmers had not had the best of the argument. However that may be, it is clear enough from assertions like these that Cook had far more to learn from Kant than he supposed, and his lectures throughout rest on uncriticized, dogmatic assumptions of the very kind against which Hume, let alone Kant, had argued with such force."[2]

Since it would be a mistake to underestimate the influence of a professor on a student of such keen intellect as William Milligan, and having had the opinion of another regarding Dr. Cook's Moral

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1. Ibid. pp. 11, 12.
2. Ibid. p. 12.

Philosophy course, let us look at the notebook ourselves.

In his introductory lecture Dr. Cook says that "the examination of our mental constitution elevates our views of the Creator, enlarges the mind, and prepares for the trials of life."[1]

Let us notice that here the actual theme of the philosophy course is set; it is the looking not at an object "out there" but a turning into one's own mind, an introversion. Cook attempts to establish the legitimacy of this focus by an appeal to the use of the inductive method as applied to our own minds. He refers to the beneficial consequences that follow from the Baconian inductive approach to material phenomena. Why not then use this method in application to mental phenomena? Again, Cook is, of course, following in the main the so-called philosophy of Common Sense propounded by Thomas Reid, and after him, with variations, by Thomas Brown and Dugald Stewart. Reid had seen in Hume the logical consequence of the philosophy of Descartes and, after him, of Locke and Berkeley. Though these differed among themselves considerably, he believed that they all held to what he called the 'ideal philosophy', and that Hume had merely spelled out the sheer scepticism to which such a philosophy must inevitably lead. Reid had seen as the presupposition of this philosophy the belief that the knower had no immediate contact with an external world out there, but only with ideas or impressions.

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1. Notes of Lectures on Moral Philosophy, Volumes I and II, as delivered by Dr. Cook, professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of St. Andrews, A.D. 1831-32, by Henry L. Scott Notebook, (University of St. Andrews, Library, call number M S B J, 1006 C 6, Vols. 1 and 2), p. 1.

These formed the basis of all thinking and generalising and abstracting and were combined by the mind only, there being no demonstrative proof of a real, external being such as the world, or other people, or God; and, when applied to the self, it, too, evaporated, along with every so-called a priori, including the principle of cause and effect. Hume, in his celebrated essay on Miracles, had produced a sophistical argument against the reality or truth of miracles or of the evidence for miracles. It could have been that Hume meant his essay to be a specimen of his dialectical skill in arguing on a given hypothesis; for his argument against miracles as contrary to the course of nature, was itself contrary to the implication of his own philosophy that there is no such thing as a course of nature; Hume's

> "scepticism extends to the whole external world; to every thing except the ideas or impressions on the mind of the individual; so that a miracle which is believed, has in that circumstance alone, on his principles, as much reality as any thing can have."[1]

Incidentally, it can be argued that not only is Hume's reasoning based on a premiss that he himself did not hold but the reasoning itself is not valid. As Whately claimed, it is based on an ambiguity in the application of the word 'experience'; we sometimes understand our own personal experience; sometimes, general experience.

> "Hume has availed himself of this (practical) ambiguity, in his Essay on Miracles; in which he observes, that we have

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1. R. Whately, D.D. Elements of Logic, John W. Parker, London, 1861, p. 201.

> experience of the frequent falsity of testimony, but that the occurrence of a Miracle is contrary to our Experience, and is consequently what no testimony ought to be allowed to establish. Now had he explained whose Experience he meant, the argument would have come to nothing; if he means, the Experience of mankind universally, i.e. that a Miracle has never come under the experience of any one, this is palpably begging the question; if he means the Experience of each individual who has never himself witnessed a Miracle, this would establish a rule (viz. that we are to believe nothing of which we have not ourselves experienced the like) which it would argue insanity to act upon."[1]

It was primarily in reaction to the philosophy of Hume, which was claimed to be based on experience alone, that the Common Sense School took its stand. It is, therefore, well to see that Reid, an ordained minister, believing that Faith was thereby endangered, attempted to construct an undergirding philosophy that should have, in addition to experience as a base, some common sense principles which themselves were not derivable from experience. Hume had convinced them of the impossibility of deriving such principles from experience alone. Therefore, in order to hold these principles they must be found in a sphere other than external experience --- the mind or consciousness itself. And these principles, among them the principle of cause and effect, were to be regarded as neither a priori nor provable from experience, but discoverable in the mind. Thus, the popularity of this philosophy at that time is accounted for. It was believed that scepticism was answered, the Baconian, Newtonian inductive method was maintained, and the principles upon which the mind, daily life, natural philosophy, natural theology and even

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1. Ibid. pp. 199, 200.

revealed theology rested were upheld. That Chalmers was not satisfied with this effort, as being contrary to the most distinctive characteristic of the inductive spirit, will become evident, but it is equally certain that Cook was in the main satisfied with it; and this is what he taught his pupils, Milligan among them.

Let us turn to some of the details of the Common Sense Philosophy, as taught critically but nevertheless wholeheartedly by George Cook. He admits the difficulty in applying the inductive method to the mind itself; great effort is required; it is a limited field of observation, we can examine merely our own minds, but nevertheless this inductive method can investigate the laws of the mind and the foundation of knowledge.[1]

There are

> "two direct ways of obtaining acquaintance with the mind, by the examination of language and by giving attention to human action and conduct. But we must rest chiefly on the examination of the mind itself."[2]

> "To the Supreme Being all truth is constantly open; created beings acquire it in the mode ordained by the Creator --- Different orders of intelligent beings --- to man the five senses are the inlets of knowledge --- to each of them a peculiar province is assigned."[3]

> "We must resolve our belief in extension, through the sense of touch into the positive appointments of the Deity; it cannot be explained by association."[4]

We are told that the sense of sight is the most important of all senses, for we have though it "the perception and belief of

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1. Notes of Lectures, op.cit. p. 7.
2. Ibid. p. 10.
3. Ibid. p. 13.
4. Ibid. p. 18.

external objects."[1] Again, "vision is a law of our nature, and there is no explanation of it other than its being the appointment of the Deity."[2] Dr. Cook teaches that "it is inconsistent with our notions of Divine Wisdom that the senses should have been given to delude us."[3] It is interesting to note that he held that there is such a thing as absolute motion.[4] In an enquiry as to the origin of the judgments connected with the operations of the senses we are led to "rest with confidence" on "intuitive" judgments as "the foundation of knowledge."[5] The decisive answer to this doctrine (the theory of perception) is afforded by "the application of the inductive philosophy to our mental phenomena."[6]

Here again we see that Cook turns away from "outside experience" back into his own mind, still claiming the legitimacy of the inductive method, in order to discover there the basis for judgments relating to the working of the senses; the judgments are "intuitive" within consciousness and are not grounded on the knowledge received from the outside. As applied to "the laws of nature", Cook holds to this theory in spite of his differing from Dugald Stewart, whom he quotes so favourably in other contexts, for he says that Stewart's theory of the ground on which we rest our belief of a material world is erroneous, his theory being that "our previous conviction of the

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1. Notes of Lectures, op.cit. p. 28.
2. Ibid. p. 33.
3. Ibid. p. 37.
4. Ibid. p. 40.
5. Ibid. p. 41; See Appendix, Note I.
6. Ibid. p. 55.

permanence and stability of the laws of nature is essential to it, and represents such conviction as derived from experience."[1]

We see what all of this means now in relation to the memory and so to testimony and evidence, and recognize this as a defence against the Humean scepticism as to the reliability of testimony. Cook, following the Common Sense school, taught that we are conscious of what now exists, that we remember what existed, that memory must have an object, that we implicitly believe what we clearly remember, that memory is the great source of acquired knowledge, that testimony rests on it, and that faith in it is not the result of reasoning but a law of our nature, an original faculty of our mind.[2]

We are told that we must go along with Reid in holding that all conclusions must be tried by First Truths. "The philosophy of Dr. Reid cannot in fact be opposed without subverting the foundation of all reasoning."[3]

Dr. Cook would have us know that the philosophy of Kant coincides more with the philosophy of Reid than with that of Locke. We have noticed, too, that Cook held to the idea of absolute motion. This would indicate that he, following Reid (who, like Kant, was greatly influenced by the work of Sir Isaac Newton and also by the scepticism of Hume) believed that the "absolute" --- absolute motion, absolute time, and absolute space, - all pointed to First Principles of the mind, "intuitive" truths, which could not be demonstrated but

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1. Notes of Lectures, op.cit. p. 57.
2. Ibid. pp. 64, 65.
3. Ibid. p. 80.

must be seen as the foundation of reason and its application to phenomena.

> "There are certain truths which we must believe --- Relate either to the mathematical or what may be called the contingent sciences --- mathematical first principles styled necessary truths --- Instance of the absurdity of trying to demonstrate them --- By them [First Truths] all conclusions must be tried --- This brought strikingly into view by Dr. Reid."[1]

This idea of First Truths, or Principles, is embedded in the teaching of Dr. Cook, and we must not underestimate its influence on William Milligan during his student days and even later. We might wonder how the influence could be so great when it consisted of but one course during one year of his undergraduate days. There are two answers to be made to this question: the first is that this course along with the Natural Philosophy course, of equal length, made up the entire content of what might be called "positive teaching" during Milligan's four undergraduate years. All the other courses --- Greek, Latin, Logic and Mathematics --- dealt primarily, of course, with the tools of knowledge, both linguistic and formal; and where mathematics was looked upon as positive to that extent at least, it was viewed in the light of the philosophical teaching then in vogue. The second reason for the importance of Dr. Cook's course for its influence upon Milligan's thinking and viewpoint will be evident when we look to the two theological essays he wrote while at St. Mary's Divinity Hall, for undoubtedly the theological faculty did not differ materially in its view of philosophy and natural theology.

As we begin to investigate the relationship between what

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1. Notes of Lectures, op.cit. p. 79.

Milligan was taught in Dr. Cook's class and what he was taught in the Divinity College, let us see what Dr. Cook's view of this relationship was.

> "All reasoning must proceed from first principles --- object of it should be to discover and establish truth, which, unless there be some undisputed truths, is impossible --- Reasoning may be employed either about necessary or contingent truths --- the former termed demonstration --- When properly conducted and fully understood it must produce conviction. Demonstration supplied the deficiency arising from the limited extent of intuition...Probable reasoning involves the permanence of nature."[1]

We begin to see that throughout this course Dr. Cook teaches that natural theology underlies Revealed Theology, which is based on the First Truths of philosophy. In section XXXI on Belief, Reason, and Reasoning, he states that there are

> "two fundamental laws as well as principles of belief --- they must be distinguished, they regulate belief and themselves must be believed, and they are illustrated in the uses of testimony."[2]

Here again we see the "common sense" defence of testimony in face of the criticism of David Hume. The belief in testimony is founded not on the probabilities of the events themselves but "intuitively" on the constitution of the mind; so that rather than argue from Hume's presuppositions, the Common Sense School put forth its own presuppositions or, rather, principles or first truths. Later we shall see how Thomas Chalmers confronted this problem, but for now it is for us to see that the kind of philosophical basis William Milligan was being taught was one that was bound to bring about a

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1. Ibid. pp. 80, 81, 82; it is well to be aware that the notebooks quoted consist of short, abbreviated statements, many of which are not followed out or enlarged upon.

2. Ibid. p. 81.

conflict in his thinking, especially in regard to the historical grounding of the manuscripts of Christianity. He most certainly began to be aware of the tension in this area in Dr. Cook's classroom, and could not but be conscious of Dr. Cook's regard --- or lack of it --- for the writings if not the person of Dr. Chalmers. And we need to remember, too, that it was known, and known well, in St. Andrews that Dr. Chalmers had been the human instrument for the founding of the University Missionary Society, of which Milligan was a member and later an officer. Chalmers had been a pastor to the town, had instituted the Sabbath evening Bible Class for children in the community, had enlisted Divinity Hall Students as under-shepherds, had been for many their "father in God", had made a great impact as an exciting and inspiring teacher, and had upheld the freedom of the students and the parents of the students in their choice of the place where they, the students, could worship. This personal influence of Chalmers without a doubt lingered on and could not but have had an effect upon the students who attended the University following Chalmers' departure to Edinburgh.

But, to return to Dr. Cook's lectures, in section LIV on "the fundamental principles of Natural Religion" we come to the crux of the whole argument.

> "The appearance of nature always regarded as effects --- led to this by experience and observation --- all natural science discerned to rest upon it --- no necessary connection between natural causes and their effects --- this shown by Butler, Reid, Price and Stewart --- some infer from this that there is nothing more in causation than that one thing precedes another --- the inference does not follow --- it is supported by Hume

--- the other approach [Cook's] led to an ultimate cause. Hume affirmed that, properly speaking, there is no such thing as causation."[1]

"This follows from his [Hume's] definition of a cause. The foundation of Theism thus destroyed. An intuitive dictate of the mind in reference to what is termed the relation of cause and effect --- notion of cause and effect, though suggested by experience, does not rest upon it as its evidence. When the notion is once suggested, it is held to be an intuitive truth --- and must independently of all reasoning be believed."[2]

Continuing under the same heading, "On the Fundamental Principles of Natural Religion" in section LV, the notes read:

"That one thing follows another and that one thing is a cause of another two distinct propositions --- If there be nothing but sequence, there is no satisfactory account of the production of the world; and we cannot reason from it to a cause of its creation --- Necessity of a cause to produce an effect a first principle or intuitive truth. It is the foundation of all reasoning to prove the divine existence --- two ways in which for this purpose it may be applied --- Argument a priori: foundation of it, that as something exists, something must have previously existed as its cause. Argument a posteriori: It starts out from the same truth but seeks to determine the nature of the cause from the effect. If the intuitive principle be derived both these modes of argument fail --- Argument a priori leads to vague and obscure speculations --- Language employed in it deficient in precision --- Reasoning a priori not in general satisfactory --- Opinion to this effect by Dr. Reid --- Mr. Stewart and Mr. Brown --- Convincing nature of the argument a posteriori --- assertion of Mr. Hume that it does not apply to the universe because there is exhibited by it only one effect --- Rests upon the false assumption that in drawing inferences from a design to a designing cause we are guided wholly by experience --- were the universe a solitary effect it would be more philosophical to ascribe it to the cause than to the reverse ... It displays, however, innumerable effects --- Inferences obviously deducible from them."[3]

"In opposition to what is thus proved, it has been affirmed that we cannot by the exercise of our own faculties form any notion of God --- this strenuously supported by Dr. Chalmers --- Involves in it that there is no foundation for natural religion."[4]

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1. Notes of Lectures, op.cit. p. 129.
2. Ibid. p. 140.
3. Ibid. pp. 141-143.
4. Ibid. pp. 147, 148.

> "If we admit the assertion of Dr. Chalmers, all enquiry into natural religion is useless."[1] "If we have no conception of theism, then is there no difference between the propositions, every effect must have a cause, and no effect requires a cause. Revelation must be founded on Natural Religion because if there be no evidence in the one there can be no more in the other."[2]

There follows here a long note in opposition to Chalmers.

And finally, "Note: Proof of natural greater than revealed religion --- The creation of the world greater than any miracle."[3]

3. Natural Philosophy

Lest we think that William Milligan was not at least exposed to a more truly inductive or scientific method, before we turn to his Divinity College years, let us look briefly at what he probably received in the Natural Philosophy Course, taught by Professor Jackson. We recall that in his testimony before the Royal Commission, Jackson had referred to "the Baconian or Inductive Logic" and "the Newtonian Philosophy". What he meant by these phrases is illustrated by some notes taken of his introductory lectures by Henry Ramsay for the session 1834-35 (the year before Milligan entered the University).

> "(I) Hydrostatics
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> 1. In mechanics, whatever be the numbers and relations of forces, we can represent the conditions of equilibrium by some formula or another, or if we can find none sufficiently manageable, it is to be attributed to the existing deficiency of mathematical science, and not to the want of sufficient data. The case very different in Hydrostatics --- the separate particles of fluids cannot be enumerated in their relations of equilibrium or motion --- we cannot find formulae for each particle --- they are in-numerable --- we must have recourse therefore to experiment and endeavour by this means to ascertain some characteristic property from which others may be deduced.

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1. Notes of Lectures, op.cit. p. 152.
2. Ibid. p. 165.
3. Ibid. p. 166.

2. "In this view a Fluid may be defined to be a mass of particles so constituted that any force, however small, is propagated equally throughout. This strictly applies only to a perfect fluid. No actual fluid however is exactly so, but this can be no objection to the definition, for we can demonstrate nothing even in pure mathematics without having recourse to some standard which is merely Idea. In Hydrodynamics we establish the laws which should regulate perfect fluids --- and then referring these to actual fluids, we thus obtain a measure applicable to them --- some fluids such as water very nearly perfect."[1]

Here then we have illustrated that fruitful combination of hypothesis and experiment, or the hypothetico-deductive method, which it was the providential work of Galileo to demonstrate, and, following him, Thomas Kepler and Isaac Newton. And it was this method that was struggling to be applied not only to natural phenomena but to history --- that is, to the documents of history. Not that experiment in historical criticism is exactly the same as experimentation with natural phenomena; but by induction from the particulars guided by hypothesis, and deduction on the basis of the hypothesis, the theory which is based upon the hypothesis is properly tested and in this way there comes about a self-correcting method that most closely fits the facts.

4. "Distinguished Proficiency"

That William Milligan learned his lessons well in his first four years at St. Andrews is indicated by a portion of the minutes of the Presbytery of St. Andrews, dated 27 November 1839:

> "the Committee for the examination of students previously to their admission into the Divinity Hall. Reported that they examined W. Milligan on Literature, Science and Philosophy, and that after a long and searching examination they were

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1. "Notes written by Henry Ramsay on the Outlines of the Natural Philosophy Course, Session 1834-35." (Professor Jackson's Course) pp. 1-3.

> highly satisfied with the proofs which he exhibited of distinguished proficiency in all the branches of study on which he was examined."
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> The minutes are signed by "George Milligan, Clerk".[1]

B. St. Mary's Divinity Hall

After the successful completion of his four sessions at the United College Milligan began attendance in St. Mary's Divinity Hall. The Divinity session was for a period of exactly four months without any material interruption.[2]

> "Many students of Divinity only gave partial attendance on College classes. These were known as 'irregular', 'occasional', or 'partial' students, and were mostly young men who had gone through an Arts course and were employed as tutors in private families [Milligan was so employed] or teachers in parochial schools. They contented themselves with enrolling their names and attending one or two lectures, after which they disappeared and were not seen again until they were required to deliver their public exercises."[3]

There is, however, no evidence that Milligan was a partial student at the Divinity Hall, even though he was tutoring.

The St. Mary's faculty consisted of four men: Robert Haldane, the Principal; George Buist, the professor of Divinity and Ecclesiastical History; Thomas T. Jackson, the second professor of Divinity (and Biblical Criticism); and William Tennant, the professor of Hebrew and Oriental languages.

What was being taught in St. Mary's? We have a fairly clear

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1. The Minutes of the Presbytery of St. Andrews are found in the archives of the Trinity Parish Church, C. of S., St. Andrews.
2. The Curriculum of St. Andrews U. lviii.
3. The Curriculum of St. Andrews, op.cit. lvii-lviii.

idea from the testimony given to the aforementioned Royal Commission, recognizing that what was being taught in Milligan's day was substantially the same as the content of the instruction at the time of the Commissioners' visit.

Dr. John Mitchell, second professor of Divinity:

"I consider the subject of my lectures to consist of the Evidence of Christianity and Biblical Criticism."

Question: "Will you state what is the course you intend to follow, as to Biblical Criticism?"

Answer: "I make the students read a part of the New Testament, in the Greek language peculiar to the New Testament, and the character of the writers."

Question: "Have you been in the practice of directing the attention of the students to the diversities of reading in the New Testament?"

Answer: "That I consider a part of Biblical Criticism."

Question: "Pointing out those diversities of reading?"

Answer: "Yes."

Question: "Do you consider it as falling under your province to direct their attention to the Septuagint, comparing the style of that book with the New Testament?

Answer: "Yes."[1]

The Professor of Church History and Divinity, Dr. George Buist:

"I have a kind of three-fold division in every session. The first part of it consists of Lectures upon the Old Testament; the second, upon controversial subjects in Divinity --- a kind of historical view of the important controversies, such as the Atheistical Controversy, the Socinian, the Arian, and a variety of others --- that is the second object I have in view; and the last consists of Lectures upon the New Testament and Ecclesiastical History since the Christian Era --- down to the fourteenth century."

Principal Haldane told the Commissioners that he used Paley's

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1. op.cit. see note 8, pp. 108, 109.
2. Ibid. p. 110.

Evidences and Dr. Hill's Lectures,[1] and lectured on the Evidence of Natural and Revealed Religion.

> Question: "Do you consider Biblical Criticism to be of vast importance to the study of Theology?"
>
> Answer: "There can be no doubt as to its importance, and it is a great reproach to our Church, that the study of it is so much neglected."
>
> Question: "You consider it would be a very important part of the duty of the Professor of Biblical Criticism to go over the Septuagint and the New Testament with references to the vast variety of readings that exist with regard to them, and in order to make the students acquainted with the opinions as to those readings?"
>
> Answer: "Certainly; a most valuable course of Lectures might be delivered upon the Canon of Scripture, the proper method of interpreting it, the ancient and modern versions and manuscripts, the various readings, and the effects of those various readings upon the sense of the passage."
>
> Question: "Do you not consider that it would be of vast importance that a good deal of attention should be directed by the Professors to the principles of the interpretation of the Scriptures?"
>
> Answer: "Certainly; the rules and canons for the interpretation of Scripture, or what, in the language of Theologians, are called Hermeneutica Sacra, should be particularly explained."
>
> Question: "Do you know whether the Second Professor in your College is in the practice of confining himself very much to Biblical Criticism?"
>
> Answer: "I know that he has lectured partly upon the evidences of Christianity, and that he has also begun the study of Biblical Criticism with the Students, and has made them read and analyze portions of the Greek Testament. His course cannot be supposed as yet to be complete, on account of his recent appointment: but I know that he means to extend his Lectures on Biblical Criticism, that he is fond of the study, and is deeply impressed with the importance of it to the Theological Student."[2]

What we discern here is that the Commissioners were chiefly

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1. W. Paley, A View of the Evidence of Christianity, 1794.
   G. Hill, Lectures in Divinity, 1821.
2. Ibid. p. 100.

interested in ascertaining the extent to which Biblical Criticism was being taught at St. Mary's Divinity Hall. Making allowances for the fact that the Professors were being confronted by His Majesty's representatives, the answer is that Biblical Criticism was receiving some lip service but perhaps not much more than that.

Recognizing the difficulty in proving a negative, we can only say that there is little evidence to support the affirmative, and this judgment will not be altered after we have considered William Milligan's two theological essays. But the point not to be missed is that nevertheless, the spirit of the "inductive philosophy" was beginning to make itself felt not only within the theological department but also within the Biblical.

CHAPTER II

THE TWO ESSAYS

Let us now look at the two essays. Their titles are "On the Necessity of a Revelation" and "On the Relative Importance of the Different Branches of Evidence Establishing the Truths of Christianity and the Danger of Neglecting or Undervaluing Any of Them." It is almost certain that the latter won the Gray Prize Essay Award, for it has been inscribed with the name of the Award on the title page; it is also likely that the former essay was awarded the prize, else it is probable that it would not have been retained by the library.

> "The only permanently endowed prize was that founded by Dr. John Gray in 1808, for the best essay on a prescribed subject in some department of theology."[1]

It is likely, too, that the essay on Revelation Contra-Deists preceded the essay on the Branches of Evidence. In the first place, historically the former subject preceded the latter in the sequence of apologetic defence.[2] In the second place, the essay on evidence has the year 1841 inscribed in pencil on the title page; and Milligan spent his last two sessions of Divinity, 1841-42, 42-43, at the University of Edinburgh. Therefore, we will consider first the essay entitled, "On the Necessity of a Revelation."

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1. Matriculation Roll, op.cit., p. lvi. See Appendix, Note II.
2. 'The writing of "Christian evidences" forms an important chapter in the history. It predominated over other theological interests roughly from the close of the Deist Controversy to the third decade of the 19th century.' J.S. Lawton, Miracle and Revelation. Lutterworth Press, 1959. p. 62.

A. "On the Necessity of a Revelation"

This title at once indicates that the essay is an apologetic for the necessity of revelation in order to the saving of man; and it is written against the background of the old (about 150 years) controversy with the deists. The eighteenth century was the Age of Rationalism. The question centred on the relationship between faith and reason, or between Revelation and what Reason by itself can determine. The break with Rome and Papal authority had raised anew the matter of authority, and various answers were: Scripture, Tradition, and Reason. The displacement of the earth from the centre of the universe through the accomplishments of reason in conjunction with the facts of experience had called many beliefs, long accepted, into question. The discovery of the Far East had compelled men to think about God's witness in lands that had not yet received the Christian Revelation, and of a primary revelation through reason. Consequently in one way or another, and in varying degrees, men were setting up the authority of reason alongside, and even above, Revelation. Locke in his "Reasonableness of Christianity", published in 1695, had used reason only to back up or protect Revelation, as being reasonable. In 1696 John Toland, in his "Christianity not Mysterious," went a step further by saying that Christianity is not only not unreasonable but that it is not above reason --- that, in fact, whatever could not be understood could not be true. The next step, logical if not always chronological, was to say that reason by itself can arrive at the truth that man needs, so that Christianity serves merely as corroboration of what reason

establishes, a republication of that which every man really knows or can know. This was the point of view of Matthew Tindal in his "Christianity as Old as Creation." Then there were the deists who claimed not only that Christianity was superfluous but that it was positively immoral; so, Charles Blount, as early as 1680, and especially Anthony Collins with his "Discourse of Free Thinking" in 1713. And so reason was pitted against Revelation. Milligan mentions several of these man and others: Lord Bolingbroke, Blount, the Earl of Shaftesbury, Collins, Chubb, Tindal and Toland. It is easy for us to dismiss these men today, but we do not always understand that they did have their positive value, in spite of much crudity. They did serve the purpose of helping to drive the apologists at least in the direction of the historical. F.R. Tennant has given us his opinion that Deism is to "English Theology" as Cartesianism is to modern philosophy.

> "In its championship of freedom of thought as against obedience to authoritative scholasticism, in its search for certainty instead of groundless opinion (such as the Cambridge Platonists had been content with), in its insistence on reason as the sole instrument for acquiring and judging of truth (however inadequate its own conception of reason), deism not only presents close parallels with the system in which we are wont to see the birth of modern philosophy, but also exhibits the first emergence of a method and an outlook such as distinguish modernity from the nearer antiquity."[1]

What Milligan attempts to prove in his essay is that reason in itself is not enough, that therefore revelation is necessary. Since every real argument presupposes some common ground, the common

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1. F.R. Tennant, Miracle and its Philosophical Presuppositions, Cambridge, 1925, pp. 96, 97.

assumptions in this argument are that God is, and that man in order to reach his true end, must have certain information. As we have seen, the deists varied in their definitions of this information. But Milligan seems to choose as his specific opponents those deists who would claim that reason, on its own, could supply that information.

In the beginning of the essay Milligan tells us that "reason being the noblest gift of God to man, and that which most distinguishes him from the inferior animals, it is his duty to devote it to those purposes which may best enable him to fulfil the ends for which he was brought into being."[1] In the first chapter of Romans we learn that nature tells man that there is a God, but man's conscience is darkened. "A system of doctrine is now given, purporting to be a revelation from Heaven."[2] The doctrine is spiritually discerned; and it is attacked by those who regard it as "foolishness". The chief form of attack is "that such a means of communicating knowledge was unnecessary."[3] We are told that the deists had the advantage of living and existing in a Christian culture.

Milligan sets for himself to establish that "man is by nature corrupt and degenerate; then we are entitled to conclude that a revelation was necessary to give him his information."[4] If reason cannot lead to the revelation of how a just and offended God deals

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1. W. Milligan, On the Necessity of a Revelation, University of St. Andrews Library, p. 1.
2. Ibid. p. 2.
3. Ibid. p. 3.
4. Ibid. p. 4.

with men," if these are not discovered and enforced by natural religion in so clear a manner as to leave him who neglects them without excuse, then we are entitled to conclude that reason is not sufficient and some extraordinary revelation is necessary to point out the way to the paths of holiness and peace."[1]

In arguing with the deists Milligan assumes that they believe that there is a God; and that, if so, a revelation is possible, "For his power must extend to the accomplishment of whatever does not imply a contradiction, and there is evidently none in the present instance."[2]

Not only is revelation possible but it is also probable.

> "That it is also probable appears from this, that man is a rational creature capable of loving and serving his Maker, that this power must have been given him for some definite end, that this end could not be answered were all information withheld from him; and that therefore the keeping him in profound ignorance is less agreeable to what we know of the wisdom of God than the communicating to him the knowledge necessary for enabling him to fulfil the end of his being. Now that the powers of reason are in fact a primary revelation is not attempted to be denied by any. And the only question at issue, is, whether these powers are adequate to the desired end or rather whether they have shown themselves to be so."[3]

The first part of Milligan's argument is admittedly "from theory". In examining whether

> "the natural reason of man alone could enable him to discover those truths of religion necessary for his comfort here and

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1. W. Milligan, On the Necessity of a Revelation, op.cit. p. 5.
2. Ibid. pp. 5, 6.
3. Ibid. p. 6.

> and his happiness hereafter," and "what is the state of the natural man with regard to his God and his religion,"[1]

Milligan goes on to speak of man's fall through disobedience which rendered himself liable to the justice of an offended God. The warnings of his conscience were in vain and his heart was hardened.

> "Occupied with the objects of sense and the things of time, he is blind to the perception of Him of whom all nature speaks and deaf to the dictates of his unbiassed understanding."[2] "The few sparks of reason which he has received are so quickly extinguished by evil habits and depraved opinions that the light of nature nowhere appears."[3]

It is at this point that Milligan displays what he had been so carefully taught in the moral philosophy class, for he here indicates what the natural reason of man is capable of even after the fall. "He may perceive every cause adequate to its effect."[4] This ability to reason from effect to cause appears to be the sole power left to man's reason after the fall: but it is important for us to see that this power survived unscathed, for this was the foundation upon which all natural religion was based, and indeed all revealed religion. Revealed religion was looked upon primarily as additional (though necessary) information, chiefly if not wholly of the propositional kind. On this unfallen principle of man's power of reason even the knowledge of God is based. But from that point man who has not received the Christian Revelation is not able to go. "And though he may go a step farther and reason to the existence of the Maker of all,

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1. Milligan, On the Necessity of a Revelation, p.6.
2. Ibid. pp. 8,9.
3. Ibid. p. 9.
4. Ibid. p. 9.

yet he instantly draws back from the contemplation of an infinite, external Being."[1] The human reason can speak only of justice and punishment. Perhaps in reference to what man has learned through natural science Milligan tells us that

> "all he can gather from nature is merely a large and undigested collection of facts...He needs to be informed of the result to which all his information should conduct him, and this must be supplied by some means independent of the information itself, in other words by something else than the natural light of reason."[2]
>
> "Some revelation from Heaven is necessary -- necessary to declare that the Lord God reigneth and that he is made known in the works which he has created, to disclose those features in his character which may lead man to contemplate him with hope as well as fear -- to rouse him from his lethargy, -- to correct his false notions and foolish prejudices -- to acquaint him with the true nature of virtue and to lay before him sufficient motive to induce him to practice it."[3]

This is a conclusion which Milligan admits is deduced from "theory". But in the second part of the argument he sets himself to establish the conclusion more firmly by the historical approach, by enquiring:

> "What were the opinions of the ancients with regard to the great truths of religion before the appearance of Christ and the promulgation of the Gospel?"

We should notice here again that Revelation consists of great truths; and this is the only place in the entire essay that the word 'Christ' is used. Throughout our investigation of the development of William Milligan's theology, we shall discern a movement towards the inductive, the evidential, the historical, the person of Christ. Here he is engaged in defending the Bible and its

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1. Ibid. p. 10.
2. Ibid. p. 12.
3. Ibid. p. 13.

propositional content, as God's revelation from Heaven. But in order to move from a merely "theoretical defence" he must appeal to the evidence of history. In this reference to history before Christ we have

> "the only period from which we can with the most perfect accuracy learn the true attainments which reason is enabled to make, for it will not be maintained that she was then either less powerful or her field less extensive than at the present day, while at the same time she derived no assistance from revelation."[1]

Milligan undoubtedly followed here the main lines of the argument for the necessity of revelation as given by the apologists of the eighteenth century. One such work, published in 1705, is entitled A Discourse of the Necessity and Usefulness of the Christian Revelation; by Reason of the Corruptions of the Principles of Natural Religion among Jews and Heathens, by Daniel Whitby, whom Milligan quotes. Another book on the same subject was John Leland's The Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Religion, shewn from the State of Religion in the Ancient Heathen World, published in 1763.

Milligan proceeds to state "the doctrines of which the ancient philosophers had no idea." They are

> "the original state of happiness and purity in which man was created: his falling from that estate of his own accord and by his transgressions; and the means devised by infinite wisdom for restoring him to the favour of God and enabling him to overcome the evil effects of his fall."[2]

Observation and induction taught the ancients "that God is infinitely good and that therefore it is improbable that he should

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1. Milligan, On the Necessity of a Revelation, p. 14.
2. Ibid. p. 15.

have created man in the state in which you find him."[1]

Here Milligan refers to Plato and Cicero. But though they were aware of man's depravity they were not able to give a "reasonable account of it".

> "They acknowledged their ignorance, or had recourses to the most absurd suppositions, such as, that the soul of men is of itself perfectly pure and uncorrupted, but that it is contaminated by being united to the body in which lay all the sin, or, that the soul apostatized in a pre-existent state and that it was sent into the body as a punishment for its offences."[2]

They often blamed God for their wickedness, defending themselves with the plea that so strong was the constitution of their nature inclining them to do evil they could not resist it. This fallen man without revelation cannot reason himself into God's pardon nor can he learn it from analogy. Even if he feels that he should repent, reason gives him no grounds for trust in forgiveness. And the same can be said of experience, with all its bloody rites and ceremonies.

Having shown that the learned men of antiquity were "ignorant of several of the most interesting and important doctrines of revelation," Milligan next enquires "to what degree of knowledge they had attained with regard to those of which they could not but have some conception".[3]

Thales, the founder of the Ionic School, believed that water was the central principle. Anaximander, his pupil, believed in

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1. Ibid. p. 16.
2. Ibid. p. 17.
3. Ibid. p. 23.

"an infinity of principles capable of generating each of them (the multitude of effects) respectively".[1]

With Anaximenes it was air. With Anaxagoras it was the combination of "the notion of external matter" with that of "an infinite uncreated mind which fashioned and organized the whole".[2]

In this manner Milligan proceeds through the ranks of the sages of the ancients: Socrates, Plato, the Pythagoreans, the Peripatetics (Aristotle), Zeno, the Epicureans, Cicero, Plotinus, Plutarch, Pliny. No one of them had known the true God! God was identified with almost every idea or imagination of man, with the State or with Fate; His will with "the scream of the raven or the entrails of a fowl", or with "the mad effusions of the priestess of Apollo or the voice from the cave of Trophonius". There were Jupiter, Apollo, Mercury, Ceres, Bacchus, Vulcan, virtues, vices, accidents, inanimate bodies, even "an unknown God".

Such an apologetics is rarely used today, but any one who confronts such a menagerie of gods cannot but be impressed with the value of this approach, for we do tend to be unaware of what was believed apart from revelation.

Next we are told something of the degrading character of the divinities of the ancients; corresponding to this, some of the rites of worship are mentioned. We are shown "the depth of depravity to which the human mind can sink with no better guide than reason".[3]

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1. Milligan, On the Necessity of a Revelation, p.24.
2. Ibid. p. 25.
3. Ibid. p. 39.

There follows an inquiry to determine "if the ancients entertained true notions of that life which is to come".[1] Some held that eternal life was a reward for being a good citizen, for conforming most closely to the national religion, for being a good warrior, or a member of the senate. Some believed that the soul is a material substance; others who held that it is immaterial were divided as to the manner of its existence and of its dissipation. The Pythagoreans believed that the soul is necessarily immortal because "originally separated from the essence of God, it was of the same nature as He and with him co-eternal".[2]

Socrates was uncertain about the future life. Plato argued for the immortality of the soul on very erroneous principles. Aristotle, the Stoics, Cicero, Plutarch, Lucian, Pliny, Seneca, the Cynics, the Cyrenaics, the Epicureans, the Pyrrhonians all either ridiculed the notion of the immortality of the soul, or expressed great uncertainty as to the belief or else denied it altogether.

> "Revelation can never suffer by comparison with the noblest efforts of human genius. Beside her they sink into insignificance, and the highest attainments of mankind but show the inestimable nature of her perfections; the bitterest attacks of her enemies serve but to demonstrate the impregnable state of her defences; and out of the blackest night in which she may be involved she will emerge unscathed and only purer and more lovely than before."[3]

The doctrine of the future life was ridiculed by the ancient poets, who were always very influential. "Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die was indeed the maxim of all the poets of the Heathen

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1. Ibid. p. 41.
2. Ibid. p. 46.
3. Ibid. p. 54.

world."[1]

Milligan next deals with a subject that was to play a fundamental role in the development of his theology.

> "It will also be found that they [the ancients] had no idea of the resurrection of the body. Entirely ignorant of the connection between the soul and the body, the ancients always regarded the latter as the prison house of the former, into which it had been sent for the punishment of its offences, and by which being weighed down and oppressed, it could make no true progress in philosophy until delivered from the load.
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> "Hence it was that when the early Christians declared their belief in the resurrection of the body, they were ridiculed by the opponents of the Gospel who strove by burning them on the funeral pile and scattering their ashes to the winds to bid defiance to the doctrine and throw contempt upon its professors. Hence, too, as we are informed, when the men of Athens heard of the resurrection of the body, some mocked (Acts 17.32)."[2]

Due to lack of the Christian revelation, Milligan adds, we find that the moral maxims and much more the moral actions of even the best of the ancient philosophers were indications of inward impurity and outward indecency. There was blasphemy, exposure of infants, slavery, suicide, theft, and false witness.

> "The great principle of love to enemies was utterly unknown and forgiveness of injuries had come to be considered a weakness rather than a virtue".[3] Revenge and pride were uppermost in men's minds. They prayed only for temporal goods, for riches, honours, and health. Their ideas also about the summum bonum were very confused. There were more than three hundred different opinions: such as pleasure, self-love, freedom from pain, the delights of Science, bravery, and a desire for supreme despotic power.
>
> "When we turn from the Greeks and Romans to the other Gentile nations of the world the picture darkens rather than improves. Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians were sunk in the lowest idolatry."[4]

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1. Ibid. p. 55.
2. Ibid. pp. 56, 57.
3. Ibid. p. 62.
4. Ibid. p. 69.

It is interesting to consider now what position is assigned to the Jews, B.C. We recall that it is Milligan's task to show "what were the opinions of the ancients with regard to the great truths of religion before the appearance of Christ and the promulgation of the Gospel".[1] Obviously, he could not have said that the Old Testament was not part of Revelation; but he sees the centre of Revelation in Christ and His gospel, and is therefore willing to include even the Jews B.C. in the class of the ancients who had not been able to arrive at the truths of the New Testament gospel. This does not mean he does not admit that the Jews had a special relation to Revelation; he only means to point out that even they, with their special relationship, needed a Revelation.

> "Nay even the Jews, the chosen people of the Lord who had been favoured with his peculiar care and instruction, who had his law in their hands -- a law shown to be of Divine authority by the awful solemnities under which it had been delivered to them -- even they had fallen from their original state and had great need of a revelation to enlighten them."[2]

Milligan goes on to describe briefly the characteristics of their various groups -- Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and the common people -- at the time of the coming of Christ. They all had the common characteristic, that they had placed

> "the whole of religion in the Rites and ceremonies of their worship, they judged of any one's piety by his zeal in the performance of them".[3]

With this Milligan has concluded his survey of the ancient

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1. Ibid. p. 13.
2. Ibid. p. 69.
3. Ibid. p. 70.

world before the appearance of Christ; and such was the state of that world that "no doubt can be entertained of the necessity that existed for a revelation".[1]

The third part of the argument which Milligan sees as strengthening his conclusion is a consideration of

> "the present state of those countries in which the blessed sound of the Gospel has not been heard and which there is every reason to believe form an accurate representation of what the whole world would have been, had no revelation been vouchsafed."[2]

Milligan briefly details the various shortcomings of the religion and therefore the perverted morality of the Hindoos [sic], the Chinese, and the Mohammedans. One remark -- with Milligan's professor's marginal and fair comment on it -- is worth quoting. Milligan wrote that

> "whatever knowledge the priests may possess they keep carefully back from the people, for like all other false religions, Buddhism retains its authority only where the people sit in darkness and where reason has no scope for exercise."[3]

The comment:

> "incautiously expressed. The statement seems to imply that if reason had fair scope, it would repudiate all false religions."

By giving the facts about both ancient and modern heathen worlds Milligan believes that he has clearly shown the advantage of revelation and also its necessity. But he has one more point to deal with, for

> "modern infidels will not allow this conclusion to be so rapidly drawn -- and they endeavour to say, for to such shifts are they driven, that the ignorance of the ancients was owing to their

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1. Milligan, On the Necessity of a Revelation, p. 70.
2. Ibid. p. 70.
3. Ibid. p. 71.

> not improving aright the light of nature but that in these latter times the powers of the mind have been discovered and properly applied, and that reason can now soar to Heaven unaided by the wings of Revelation."[1]

On this basis then he is led to enquire, in the conclusion of an argument for the necessity of revelation,

> "what really are the boasted discoveries of modern Deism, and to see if even a revelation is not still needed by those who pretend to despise its aid."[2]

At this point Milligan mentions by name some of the men he considered to be deists, and gives some of the beliefs of these men for the purpose of exhibiting their variety and sub-Christian thought.

> "Of these one of the most distinguished was Lord Bolingbroke,[3] who maintained that the qualities of God were merely natural and not moral; that for men to strive to attain to the likeness of the righteousness of God was blasphemy; that the doctrine of a particular providence is absurd; that there is no conscience in man; that it is ridiculous to say that the soul is immaterial; that man's happiness is to be sought for here and that there is no place of future rewards and punishments."[4]

There follows a summary of what Milligan held regarding other deists:

Thomas Hobbes was not certain whether he believed in God or not; he thought that perhaps only matter existed; civil law is the only authority.

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1. Ibid. p. 75.
2. Ibid. p. 76.
3. Lord Bolingbroke poured scorn on all historical research. For information on the deists, see J.S. Lawton, Miracles and Revelation and A. Richardson, History Sacred and Profane; particulars noted in Bibliography.
4. W. Milligan, On the Necessity of Revelation, p. 76.

Charles Blount believed in God, but held that the world is eternal.[1]

The Earl of Shaftesbury held that the magistrate was the sole judge, that there are no future rewards and punishments; he was an atheist.[2]

Anthony Collins believed that man is a machine.[3]

Thomas Chubb held that God does not intervene in the world, that prayer was of no use, that the future life is doubtful, and the soul is probably material.[4]

Matthew Tindal doubted if there was a God.[5]

John Toland ascribed divinity to the world.[6]

> "Hume held that we have no reason to believe that the world proceeded from a cause and that there are no solid arguments to prove the existence of a Supreme Being, that man is a mere machine and that we cannot rationally look for any rewards or punishments of the existence of which observation and experience do not inform us. His moral precepts were equally degrading,

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1. Charles Blount in 1683 published what he considered to be a proof that Miracles are no violation of the laws of nature; this work was little more than a paraphrase of B. Spinoza's Tractatus Theologico-Politicus. C. Leslie's Short and Easy Method with the Deists, 1701, was written with Blount and others in mind.
2. Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury, was attacked as a deist by Leland, Warburton, Berkeley, and many other Christian apologists.
3. Anthony Collins published in 1713 a tract entitled A Discourse of Free Thinking. In 1724, continuing his rationalistic attack on religious dogma, he published A Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion, which provoked at least thirty-five written replies.
4. T. Chubb published the Discourse on Miracles in 1741.
5. Matthew Tindal's Christianity as Old as the Creation, 1730, was an attempt to show that specifically Christian dogmas seem to be an unnecessary addition to natural theology.
6. In his Christianity not Mysterious, 1696, John Toland held that revelations, if true, could not be above man's reason.

> for he considered self-denial and humility to be mischievous, and he ranked pride, eloquence, strength, and cleanliness among the virtues."[1]

After a brief mention of Voltaire, Diderot and Frederick II, Milligan quotes Rousseau in regard to the diversity of the opinions of the deists:

> "I conceived that the insufficiency of the human understanding was the first cause of this prodigious diversity of sentiment, and that pride was the second."[2]

Milligan next turns to what he calls the effects of the rational character, or of infidelity, chiefly as exhibited in the French Revolution.

> "Within the short space of ten years, no less than 3,000,000 persons are computed to have perished...Such are the effects of infidelity upon a nation -- such the inevitable results of mankind being restrained by no law but that promulgated by the light of reason."[3]

With this then Milligan has presented the evidence for the inadequacy of reason in face of man's need. Then follows an important series of summary statements.

> "When, from a consideration of the facts above stated, we deduce the necessity of a revelation,let it not be supposed that it is meant to be alleged that there was any necessity imposed upon the Almighty to grant a revelation, or that it was not in his power to have communicated the knowledge which he had done in any other way. All that can be intended is that man, before he could fulfil the great ends of his being, before he could have any well grounded expectation of pardon, before he could be sufficiently acquainted with his duty, and have motives strong enough to induce him to practice it, needed some instruction superior to that which the light of reason and nature then afforded him.

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1. Milligan, On the Necessity of a Revelation, p. 77.
2. Ibid. p. 77.
3. Ibid. p. 81.

Let it be observed also that it is not asserted that it is impossible for the light of reason to discover something that may be called a natural religion. All that is meant is, that it is possible to conceive that, by some particular causes, the light of nature might be so obscured, that man was unable by means of it alone to arrive at the knowledge it was capable of conveying. We have the authority of the Apostle Paul for stating that this was really the case in the ancient world, for, says he, 'when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, nor were...and even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient'.

That this statement of the Apostle is really in accordance with the fact must be evident to every one from a consideration of what has been stated, from which we are fully entitled to infer that a revelation was necessary to enlighten, to regenerate, to humble and to console mankind.

We have found that man originally created in happiness and purity, fell from this state by his own transgression, -- that, in consequence, the works of nature lost their power over him, and when he might have known God, he glorified him not as God. It has appeared too that, while from nature it was impossible for man to discover that he had been the cause of his own misery, and that a way had been opened by which 'God might be just and yet the justifier of the ungodly', so he even did not properly interpret her language. For,

(1) He was ignorant of the true nature of God.

(2) they were ignorant of how God should be worshipped.

(3) they were ignorant of the immortality of the soul, and of a future state of rewards and punishments and of the resurrection of the body.

(4) they were ignorant of the summum bonum of man and of the true nature of morality and virtue.

While such was the state of the ancient heathen world, modern heathen nations are equally degraded, superstitious, immoral, cruel and vicious; and even the boasted religion of the Deists themselves is but a system of facts [sic] many of which are contradictory and many subversive of virtue and encouraging to vice.

Thus then theory, historical evidence, and actual experience combine in leading us to the same conclusion. Mutually assisting and enlightening each other, they unite in declaring that, where the religion of nature only is to be found, vice gives rise to cruelty and ignorance to superstition. With a voice no less strong however do they proclaim that, where the sun of righteousness has arisen -- where reason has given place to faith -- philosophy to religion -- mere morality to the doctrines of the Gospel, 'mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have embraced each other.'"[1]

1. Ibid. pp. 82-87.

In this first essay Milligan's purpose was to show, not that the Christian revelation is true but that it is necessary or needed. He does not deny the validity of a natural religion but only insists that it is not adequate. His opinion is that natural religion, or natural reason, can, by reasoning from effect to cause, arrive at the being of God and even the possibility and probability of His giving a further revelation. On this basis, even natural religion, or the powers of reason, may be regarded as primary revelation. But, even with this knowledge about God, man still does not know enough; not only that, he is degenerate, cruel and without hope. To add weight to this conclusion Milligan uses Scripture which, for the sake of argument, he is willing to regard as a theory, or set of doctrines, purporting to be a Revelation from Heaven, to corroborate the independent conclusion of man's natural reason. And in addition to corroboration this set of doctrines, or further information, is shown in its capacity to fulfil the need of man, in his ignorance and degeneracy, through the Gospel. In a supplementary way Milligan, by appeal to historical evidence, displays the knowledge, or lack of it, to which man was able to attain before the Christian era and apart from the propagation of the Gospel. Consequently, he is able to appeal to theory, historical evidence and actual experience as combining in leading to the same conclusion. The religion of nature by itself has not supplied the information required by man. The doctrines of the Gospel, which are purported to be given from Heaven, claim to meet that need.

B. "On the Relative Importance of the Different Branches of Evidence Establishing the Truths of Christianity and the Danger of Neglecting or Undervaluing any of them"

The second essay won the Gray prize, and very probably was written during the last session Milligan spent at St. Andrews. This subject was prescribed by the faculty. The first essay was devoted to showing that the doctrines of Christianity are such that they afford information that is needed by man. The purpose of the second essay, as is indicated by the title, deals with the establishment of the Truths of Christianity.

Perhaps it would not be entirely beside the point to indicate what might have contributed to the local interest in the topic assigned. We have already been made aware of the great influence Thomas Chalmers had wielded while a professor in St. Andrews. He had laid great stress upon the inductive method and at the same time had taught in his course on Moral Philosophy the very great inadequacy of natural theology in relation to the establishment of the truths of Revelation. We know, too, how he attempted to apply, and in many ways succeeded in applying, the gospel to the University community of St. Andrews, which prior to his arrival was not giving evidence of what could have been called a very dynamic Christian atmosphere. We are aware, also, of the teaching of Dr. George Cook, Chalmers' successor and one of six or seven members of the "Cook dynasty" that had been and was so influential in St. Andrews and in the Church. Dr. Cook opposed Dr. Chalmers in the classroom and was one of the leaders of the Moderates in their opposition to Chalmers in the General Assembly. We know that the Disruption was impending and that men were "taking sides". Another piece of

circumstantial evidence lending colour to this topic is that the book which most readily lent itself to the theme of the essay and which was therefore most influential in its argument, was written in express opposition to a book on Christian Evidences, the author of which was Chalmers. The book Milligan used and quoted was entitled Principles of Christian Evidence illustrated by an examination of arguments subversive of Natural Theology and the Internal Evidence of Christianity, advanced by Dr. T. Chalmers, in his Evidence and Authority of the Christian Revelation, by Duncan Mearns, D.D., professor of theology in King's College and University, Aberdeen.[1]

Let us look at the essay. Because the two essays have not been published and therefore are not readily available I have determined to quote from them rather more than would ordinarily be the case.

Christianity professes to be a Revelation of God's Will.

> "Its author declared that he came from the bosom of the Father and that his doctrine was not his own but his that sent him. It is presented to our acceptance claiming to be the only religion which points out the path of duty and which contains the foundation of a sinner's hope. It places the prospect of life and immortality before those who truly embrace its doctrines and obey its pure commands while at the same time it threatens with the severest judgements those who will set at nought its counsels and will have none of its reproofs. Is it not then of the utmost importance that we should faithfully examine the grounds which form the evidence of its truth and that we should solemnly weigh every consideration which may tend to assist us in answering this great question, is the religion of the New Testament really a Divine Revelation and consequently entitled to our implicit faith and sincere obedience?"[2]

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1. Published in 1818, by the Aberdeen University Press. The second edition of the book by Chalmers was published in 1815 by William Blackwood, Edinburgh.
2. W. Milligan, Essay on the Relative Importance of the Different Branches of Evidence establishing the Truths of Christianity and the Danger of Neglecting or Under valuing any of Them. University of St. Andrews Library, p. 1.

Once again we see Revelation chiefly as doctrine, though it would include commands, threats, and counsels. To establish the truth of the doctrines we are called to examine and weigh the evidence. This word 'evidence' is the operative word for William Milligan's theological method in its early development, and continues in importance right through his theological work. It was the influence and impact of the Baconian, Newtonian, inductive method on the thought of the nineteenth century which Milligan inherited and used, not as an end in itself but as a God-given tool in his critical and exegetical work. He was to conform his method to the evidence of the senses in much the same way as did the Apostle John, as illustrated by his words,

> "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life" (I John 1.1, RSV).

Along with this evidential approach Milligan emphasised, as he did in the first essay, that what was evidenced was to be "spiritually discerned."[1] In fact the whole development of his theology is along this line of the spiritual discernment of the truth of God through the evidence which He gives. How the evidence is handled and on what basis it is considered will spell out the story of Milligan's development as a theologian. But we return to the essay.

The theologians had divided the evidence for the Truth of Revelation into the External and the Internal; and, we are told, only by a careful consideration of all their subdivisions can a full

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1. Milligan, On the Necessity of a Revelation, p.1.

view of the evidence be obtained. It is wrong to consider only one branch as necessary, for

> "to reject or even depreciate either of the great branches of evidence...is in truth to do nothing else than to take away one of the supports of revealed religion...and even render the whole building insecure. Combined together they have been the sure and tried foundation on which the faith of ages and of thousands in every age has comfortably rested."[1]
>
> "By the term External evidences we are to understand the proofs derived from the miracles which were wrought in support of the Christian religion whether these were miracles of knowledge or of power -- from the testimony of the first witnesses of Christianity and from its rapid propagation. By the term Internal evidences are meant those points of belief which are furnished by the nature of the doctrines and moral precepts of the Scriptures."[2]

At this point Milligan sets forth the same principle which formed the basis of his reasoning in the first essay, but here he spells it out at greater length; again we see the influence of the Common Sense School of Reid and Stewart and the teaching of Dr. George Cook.

> "In the first place we may observe that these two species of evidence are founded on the same principles -- a principle too which is in the strictest sense of the term philosophical -- viz. that by which, when we contemplate any effect, we infer that it has proceeded from some cause whose nature it in part declares. This principle which can neither be strengthened by argument nor weakened by sceptical doubt is one which has been held by the greatest masters of philosophy to be intuitive -- which is founded on the constitution of our nature and which operates unceasingly and under circumstances of every kind. In conjunction with consciousness and external perception it forms the source of all the knowledge that we profess either of the mental or material world, and he who denies its existence or refuses to act upon its dictates will have the field of his information limited to little more than the belief in his own individual existence. Such sceptics are few in number and to them the evidences of Christianity need not be addressed. As they do not acknowledge the existence and attributes of the God of nature, they

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1. Milligan, Essay on the Relative Importance of the Different Branches of Evidence, (hereafter referred to as Essay on Evidences), op.cit. p.3.
2. Ibid. p. 4.

> cannot be made acquainted with the God of grace, nor can they place confidence in the being of anything which they do not perceive by their outward senses or experience by their inward consciousness. It is these alone who admit the truth of the principle which we have mentioned and who acknowledge the demonstrative nature of the means by which it carries us to our conclusions that can be convinced by the evidences of our faith."[1]

For Reid and Stewart and Campbell, Hume had made the point that in experience alone no necessary connection among events could be found, that there was no necessary reason found in experience itself why any event should be expected in the future even though it had been regularly observed in the past. If so, then the principle of causation could not be held. And without this principle it was felt that natural theology, supposedly the basis of revealed religion, would collapse. In answer to this apparent threat to religion, we have seen that the Common Sense School claimed to have discovered the foundation of the principle of causation within the constitution of the human mind, within human nature -- and this without being any the less scientific. By altogether employing the strict inductive method, turned upon the mind itself, the Common Sense philosophers claimed that they -- each one in the necessarily private investigation of his own consciousness -- had discovered the firm, God-given basis of all knowledge, specifically the principle to which Milligan ever returns in his two undergraduate theological essays. And it is this principle which supposedly gives the inductive method its demonstrative nature.

> "When such persons [who recognize the validity of this principle] accordingly look abroad on the material world -- when they contemplate the order and harmony and beauty reigning throughout

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1. Ibid., pp. 4, 5; See Appendix, Note I.

> the works of creation; when they see summer and winter, seed time and harvest following each other in regular, unvarying succession, when they find the greatest and most important ends brought about by the most simple means and by the least possible expenditure of power, they are instantly led to a belief in some Being by whom these effects are produced."[1]

Man observes the vegetable and animal creation, with scientific instruments, and what does he conclude?

> "Surely that all these visible effects declare with one harmonized voice the invisible things of him who originally made and still sustains the whole, that infinity is the creation of a Being who himself is infinite -- that wise provisions are established by one who is wise and that all arrangements for the happiness of the animal creation flow from the source of unbounded goodness. The same method of conducting the investigation with the same principle for their guidance leads them by an equally direct road to the moral distinction between truth and falsehood, between right and wrong, which they cannot but feel to be eternal and immutable -- from their inability to resist making the acting up to their sense of rectitude the measure of their moral perfection -- from the secret applause which they feel from doing what is right and the stings of conscience which cannot be quieted when their conduct is the reverse -- from the pleasure which they experience at the success of the good and their regret at the triumphs of wickedness and cunning, they cannot but feel that there is a moral order established in the world, that vice is still the object of God's hatred and virtue of his kind regard and that however seeming discrepancies may now present themselves, a time will come when each will be recompensed according to its deserts -- the one with his deserved punishment, the other with the blessings which he delights to bestow."[2]

Given the required principle, discovered in the constitution of human nature, man is able by observing the effects of nature to arrive at all of these truths. Then, but only then, he is able to look with understanding to the evidences of the truths of Christianity.

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1. Ibid. p. 5.
2. Ibid. pp. 6, 7.

> "And the first thing which strikes him here is that it professes to be founded upon the evidence of miracles or sensible interruptions of the laws of nature. Of nothing however can he be more certain than that there is a course of nature in the universe far beyond the control of man. When accordingly effects are presented to him to the production of which he knows that human power is inadequate, they give a sign of the interposition of some Being superior to himself. He acknowledges however that Nature is but the name for an effect whose cause is God. Accordingly when he meets with any interruptions of that course which universal experience assures him to be unalterable by merely human agency, he is constrained under the influence of that principle to which we have alluded to acknowledge that these could proceed from no other than that great Being who at first established the course of nature and still maintains it. Between the outward miracle itself however and the doctrines of him who performed it there is no necessary connection. Unless we admit the conclusions of natural religion the one may be obvious and yet the other be false. The Being who commissioned the visible messenger and granted to him the power which he possessed for the sake of convincing mankind may be wicked. He may have resolved to deceive the creatures placed within his power and may have adopted this method as the most likely to persuade them to belief. But to such an uncertainty he can never be driven whose notions of the Deity have been gathered from the works of his hand. The Almighty is infinite in wisdom, He therefore knows what is best for us. He is unchangeable in truth: we therefore can never be deceived. The sensible interruptions accordingly of the order of nature which we behold assure us that the agent who accomplished them must have been commissioned by God while the religion which he taught and for the truth of which he appealed to the miracles must indeed be the 'Gospel of peace, the glad tidings of good things'. The argument from miracles being thus dependent upon the previous establishment of the Being and attributes of God, it will easily appear that derived from prophecy is no less so."[1]

Here again the argument from prophecy rests on that which is established by natural theology.

> "Unless we feel that the Lord in whose hands are the issues of life alone reigneth among men, there is nothing in the mere fact of a prophecy being uttered and fulfilled to lead us to an acquaintance with his nature and a knowledge of his attributes."[2]

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1. Milligan, Essay on Evidences, pp. 7-9.
2. Ibid. p. 9.

Milligan next calls upon the first witnesses of Christianity.

> "The grounds of our belief in the historical evidence of Christianity are the very same as those upon which the works borne witness to are held to be themselves conclusive. 'In the conclusions we form (says Mr. Dugald Stewart)(quoted in Mearns' reply to Chalmers, page 58) concerning the minds and characters of our fellow-creatures, as well as in the inferences drawn "concerning the invisible things that are made", there is a perception of the understanding implied, for which neither reasoning nor experience is sufficient to account'."[1]

It is well to be reminded that the purpose of both Mearns' book and the essay (with a significant qualification to be shown hereafter) is to oppose the kind of use Chalmers had made of the evidence. Chalmers, in his 1815 book on evidences, had said that the external evidences were the only legitimate evidences to employ in the Christian cause if one wishes to remain truly scientific, or inductive. The internal evidences could not be used. The argument in opposition to this is that if you disallow the argument from the internal evidences, then the argument on the basis of the external evidences will also fail; because both branches of evidence are based on the same principle -- the principle of causality, which is discovered in the consciousness. Once deny this principle, then -- according to the Common Sense School -- both natural theology and the inductive method are baseless.

The argument from the witness of the first Christians likewise depends on this philosophical principle.

> "The qualities of mind as well as matter are themselves invisible, and we can judge of them only by their sensible effects. We cannot see the understanding of any man, nor can we measure his affections and dispositions with mathematical precision, but we are capable of judging of his

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1. Ibid. p. 11.

> looks and words and actions and thus inferring with a tolerable degree of accuracy the nature of that mind which is not an object of our immediate perception.
>
> It is impossible for us to bring under direct observation the veracity, the constancy, the perseverence, the benevolence or warm piety of the first witnesses of Christianity or the first martyrs of her cause, but there is no difficulty in determining the existence of these qualities by their sensible effects, by natural unpremeditated signs of truth, by the firmness which these manifested amid suffering and persecution -- by the uniform gentleness, the kind condescension, the meekness of their demeanour, and by all those marks of which we have to make the applications in the intercourse of every day life."[1]

Another branch of the external evidence, the rapid propagation of Christianity -- also leads to the conclusion that its "wonderful effect must be traced to some cause superior to human".[2]

Milligan sums up the argument based on the external evidence:

> "While it thus appears that the foundation upon which we must rest our belief in the historical evidence of Christianity as well as the strong argument derived from its rapid propagation is no other than the principle that from the witnessing of any effects we are irresistibly led to the belief in the existence of a cause, it likewise appeared that the arguments from miracles and prophecy rested upon the very same law of our constitution and that they could not be pressed upon any reasonable being who did not admit the conclusions of Natural Religion."[3]

We now come to the Internal Evidences. We remember that Chalmers held that much of this branch was superfluous,

> "that which is founded upon the reasonableness of the doctrines, or the agreement which is conceived to subsist betwixt the nature of the Christian religion and the Character of the Supreme Being."[4]

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1. Milligan, On the Necessity of a Revelation, pp. 11, 12.
2. Ibid. p. 12.
3. Ibid. p. 12.
4. op.cit. p. 188. See above, footnote 1, page 44.

"An infidel, for example, objects against one of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. To repel the objection the Christian conceived it necessary to vindicate the reasonableness of that doctrine, and to show how consistent it is with all those antecedent conceptions which we derived from the light of natural religion. All this we count superfluous. It is imposing an unnecessary task upon ourselves. Enough for us to have established the authority of the Christian revelation upon the ground of its historical evidence. All that remains is to submit our minds to the fair interpretation of Scripture. Yes; but how do you dispose of the objection drawn from the light of natural religion? In precisely the same way that we would dispose of an objection drawn from some speculative system, against the truth of any physical fact that has been well established by observation or testimony. We would disown the system, and oppose the obstinacy of the fact to all the elegance of the speculation.

We are sensible that this is not enough to satisfy a numerous class of very sincere and well-disposed Christians. There are many of this description, who, antecedent to the study of the Christian revelation altogether, repose a very strong confidence in the light of natural religion, and think that upon the mere strength of its evidence they can often pronounce with considerable degree of assurance on the character of the divine administration. To such as these, something more is necessary than the external evidences on which Christianity rests. You must reconcile the doctrines of Christianity with those previous conceptions which the light of nature has given."..."We hold to the total insufficiency of natural religion to pronounce upon the intrinsic merits of any revelation, and think that the authority of every revelation rests exclusively upon its external evidences, and upon such marks of honesty in the composition itself as would apply to any human performance."[1]

Now William Milligan was not unaware of, nor unaffected by, this criticism, for he was unwilling to go all the way with those who held to the legitimacy of the appeal to every form of internal evidence; yet he was not willing -- at least at this time -- to follow the way urged by Chalmers. Nor, indeed, was Chalmers himself to continue to maintain his own view of the place of natural theology.

Milligan wrote in his essay:

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1. Ibid. pp. 218, 219-220, 221.

> "Now the Internal Evidence is equally entitled with the External to claim the character of being legitimate and conclusive in so far as its basis is the same. It has been the practice of many writers to include under the title of Internal Evidence the whole field of information which is conveyed to us in Scripture, and even Dr. Hill after having (cf. Divinity Vol. 1, p. 31) made it consist in 'the Superior excellence of that system contained in the books of the New Testament taken in conjunction with the condition of those whom we know to be the authors of them, in the character of Jesus Christ as drawn by his disciples and in their own character as it appears from their writings' seems farther to extend its boundaries when he says (Divinity, Vol. I, p. 39, Chapter 4, Section 1) 'The presumptive proof (which he had immediately before explained to be "the nature of the Revelation contained in the books of the New Testament") explains the importance and the dignity of that occasion upon which the Almighty was pleased to make the interposition of which these works are a sign'.[1] But upon what principle can we admit that such parts of Christianity as this bear any evidence of its truth? We are supposed to address those who, while they acknowledge their belief in a God who rules over his creatures and is interested in their welfare are yet of opinion that he has made no communications of his will to them except that which the light of nature is calculated to afford. In these circumstances we are not entitled to take any of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity and to bring them forward as evidencing its truth. They may be true but the Deist, having no principle by which to estimate their value, either despises them as unnecessary or rejects them as absurd. The whole subject of the controversy is assumed when it is said for example that the doctrine of the atonement of Christ is part of the Internal Evidence. For upon what other grounds can he give credit to this doctrine except upon the authority of the Revelation itself?"[2]

At this point in the essay there is a note inscribed by the reviewing professor which indicates the extent to which the faculty at St. Mary's, at least in his case, was committed to the view of the legitimacy of even this type of internal evidence:

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1. G. Hill, D.D., Principal, St. Mary's College, St. Andrews, Lectures in Divinity, William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London. Dr. George Hill's lectures were first published by his sons in 1821. Milligan does not mention the edition from which he quotes; but the pages of the sixth edition to which the two quotations refer are: p. 21 and p. 25.

2. Milligan, Essay on Evidences, pp. 13, 14.

> "The adaptation of the Atonement and other peculiar doctrines of Christianity to the circumstances of man is surely to be considered as one branch of the internal Evidences."[1]

The only doctrines of Scriptures, however, which Milligan allowed to constitute internal evidence are those which in a greater or in a lesser degree stand impressed upon the volume of Natural Theology. And had there been anything in Scripture contrary to the established truths of reason, then the Scripture could not have been accepted as Revelation from the same God who is the God of nature. But

> "such an examination as that to which we have alluded the New Testament has stood and stood unscathed...We recognize only the clearest deductions of reason confirmed and illustrated. What was dark in the former revelation is here enlightened."[2]

Here we have the view set forth that man's reason though darkened by sin was never entirely without light, there being certain truths at which it can still arrive on the basis of that part of the primary revelation which had no share in the Fall of man. Then when on the basis of what man does know, as applied to the testing of the validity of the claims of the New Testament, man accepts it as the Revelation of the one God, his reason (feeding, as it were, on the new information from Heaven) is enlightened and empowered above its former state.

> "Reason thus enlightened makes more noble acquisitions and the doctrines of Christianity are tried by a purer and more perfect standard. If then upon investigation it should be found that in all parts the religion of the Bible and the theology of nature agree we cannot avoid being struck with the beautiful harmony which must subsist between them. Strong in the

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1. Ibid. p. 14.
2. Ibid. p. 19.

> confidence of truth and in the goodness of its cause Christianity comes boldly forward, and instead of weakening, strengthens and exalts the very standard by which it is to be tried."[1]

In this ingenious manner Revelation seems to be given its due, while we notice that nevertheless man's reason remains, whether darkened or enlightened, the Standard, for the

> "harmony [of the different branches of evidence] is still further established when we consider that the process by which they came to form a conclusive argument is in each case strictly philosophical, being by the induction of a multitude of particular facts. There is in all this investigation neither theory nor assumption. We apply the very same principles by which the philosopher and the chemist are conducted from a multitude of particular facts to the establishing of what are called laws of nature. Placing no dependence upon speculation we demand fact for everything and deduce our conclusions either from our own personal experience or from the testimony of others in remote ages which we have ascertained to be competently given and faithfully conveyed. In the case before us then we are presented with the testimony of the Apostles of our Saviour that miracles were wrought. It was formerly seen that we can judge of testimony and of the features of a character which renders it credible only by the principle which leads from the observation of an effect to knowledge of its cause, and now when we come to consider what has been declared by the original witnesses of Christianity we find a multitude of circumstances concurring to render it credible."[2]

In what follows Milligan manifests an ability to involve his readers in the Biblical milieu which he so vividly describes:

> "They were called by Christ to be his Apostles at the commencement of his public life that they might see and hear. They were his chosen companions -- the disciples whom he loved, and they were with him in almost all the scenes of his earthly ministry. They had seen him led in ignominy to the Cross of Calvary and laid in the silent tomb. Again were they permitted to witness his appearance on earth, to associate with him in the ordinary intercourse of life and to listen to his gracious instruction. At Bethany it was their happiness to receive his parting blessing and to watch his gradual ascent to Heaven...What

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1. Milligan, Essay on Evidences, pp. 22, 23.
2. Ibid. pp. 24, 25.

> opportunities of knowledge better than these could be enjoyed or who more capable of informing us of the actions and admonitions of our Lord? Again in the character of the first witnesses of Christianity we have the fullest assurance that they would not deceive us...Their whole anxiety is to win souls to Christ, to teach the worthlessness of this world, and to point the view to a better. The religion which they taught inculcated the purest precepts of morality, and it was their constant aim to follow in the steps of him 'in whom was no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth'. In the midst of danger and the most violent opposition did they persevere in that course which they declared to be obedience to the will of God (Acts 4.19). Though hated by the Jewish people and scourged and imprisoned by their rulers, though 'persecuted, afflicted, tormented' they never once were seen to hesitate: the same holy boldness distinguished them in every situation. With a full persuasion of the trials which awaited them (John 15.20) they began their public ministry, and though every day verified their anticipations they were not dismayed. They continued faithful to the end and persevering in the same unvarying declarations, at last sealed their testimony with their blood."[1]

With great emphasis Milligan impresses upon us the matter-of-factness of the whole process of testimony and witness-bearing.

> "The things to which they principally bear witness are not opinions but facts which required neither talent nor labour to comprehend. The simple use of the bodily senses was all that was necessary to convince a spectator of the mighty miracles which Jesus wrought, and these works were so numerous that probably there was not a family in Judea unconnected in some way with some object of his gracious regard."[2]

Milligan, after referring to the testimony of the Apostles, calls upon the witness of the other converts during the time of the propagation of early Christianity. Following this, he writes:

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1. Ibid. pp. 25-27.

2. Ibid., p. 27. Recognising the different purposes of the two authors, it is nevertheless interesting to contrast the tenor of the above with what was written about four years afterwards in Copenhagen: "If the contemporary generation had left nothing behind them but these words: 'We have believed that in such and such a year God appeared among us in the humble figure of a servant, that he lived and taught in our community, and finally died', it would be more than enough."
S. Kierkegaard. Philosophical Fragments. Princeton U. Press. 1946. p. 87.

> "Thus then by a large induction of particulars are the claims of the original witnesses of Christianity to our belief completely established, and in their being so we have proof sufficient to all reasonable minds that the miracles recorded in the Scriptures were wrought to the degree and in the manner there described."[1]

It was Milligan's purpose to show that the testimony of the Apostles and of the early converts proves to "all reasonable minds" that the miracles described actually took place. Following this it is his purpose to show that these miracles give proof of the immediate action of God.

> "But when we view these miracles in the same light of inductive philosophy in which we have been considering that testimony, which exclusive of all other is insufficient to establish them, not only do we find the proof of their having been wrought very much confirmed, but we are led at once to conclude that they could be wrought by none other than the finger of God. In their own nature they were of such a kind that no one could be deceived as to their existence or mistaken as to their character. They were plain palpable facts to be judged of not according to the feelings but by the senses of those who witnessed them. The Jew and the Gentile, the ignorant and the learned were here upon the very same footing and neither required to give credence to what he could not understand. The power indeed by which they were wrought was invisible but the works themselves were presented to be judged of in the very same manner as facts of everyday occurrence. And it must accordingly at once have been seen that they were such as no natural powers could accomplish. The Almighty alone can control that course of nature which for the wisest purposes he has himself established."[2]

Milligan follows this with a descriptive list of the different miracles, all of which, he says, profess the characters by which the works of the Almighty are always distinguished, and thereby enable us to conclude that Jesus must have been sent of God because he 'doeth many miracles'.

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1. op.cit. p. 31.
2. Ibid. p. 31.

Milligan then turns to the fulfilment of prophecy and, using the same method, arrives at the same conclusion.

> "Thus has it appeared that by two entirely independent lines of argument for the truth of Christianity we are conducted precisely in the same manner. We assume nothing which has not its existence in fact; we have laid before us a multitude of minute circumstances connected with the miracles and with the prophecies of Scripture, and having determined upon the clearest principles of reason that the one must have been wrought and the other uttered and many of them fulfilled, we are fully entitled to conclude that the Omnipotent and Omniscient Jehovah can alone be the Author of the Revelation which claims to have come from him."[1]

Milligan next considers another branch of the external evidence -- the propagation of Christianity.

> "By comparing the progress which it [the Gospel] made with the opposing circumstances with which it had to contend, we shall not fail to perceive that nothing less than a Divine energy could have animated its earliest preachers and nothing less than Divine assistance accompanied their efforts."[2]

Again and again Milligan returns to the basis of his entire argument.

> "We formerly found that to each of the branches of external evidence which we have now been considering the principle of the inductive philosophy, viz. that of referring every effect to an adequate cause, was strictly applicable. Now we have seen that in each of these branches...there does exist an effect of so astonishing and so wonderful a nature that we must refer it to some cause superior to human, to that demonstration of the Spirit and of power which, while it enjoined veracity upon its witnesses, made them steadfast to the end, which enabled them to do many wonderful works, which declared to them the things which were afterwards to come to pass, and which though 'the weapons of their warfare were not carnal', made them mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds."[3]

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1. Milligan, Essay on Evidences, p. 39.
2. Ibid. p. 39.
3. Ibid. pp. 47, 48.

The same method of argument is applied to the Internal Evidences. There follows a passage that will indicate Milligan's view of Scripture at this time. "And when accordingly we open the volume containing the Revelation, a consideration of the doctrines which it teaches and of the information which it conveys will lead us conclusively to acknowledge that all Scripture must be given by inspiration of God."[1] This passage seems to imply that Milligan held what was at that time the almost universal Christian view of Scripture: that all Scripture -- and this would mean the Textus Receptus on which the King James Version was based -- was the verbally inspired Word of God. There is as yet no indication of the influence of the historical-critical method or of his future interest in that direction.

Much of what follows on the Internal Evidences is a varied repetition of what Milligan had written in the first Essay in the comparison of what men knew prior to Revelation and afterwards.

Again Milligan returns, and with even greater emphasis, to the foundation-principle of the whole argument; and again his view of Scripture is clear.

> "In the course of this essay it has thus appeared that the Internal Evidence of Christianity and the various branches of the External Evidence rest upon the same foundation, proceed in the same manner, and lead to the same conclusion. The foundation is the intuitive irresistible principle of the mind by which we judge of a cause from its visible effect -- a principle which operates in every man and under circumstances of every kind. The process again by which they evidence the truth is most strictly philosophical, requiring no assumption, admitting neither theory nor conjecture, being the same as that by which the whole noble structure of science and philosophy has been raised and the

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1. Ibid. p. 48.

> conclusion to which both infallibly lead is the same -- that the books professing to contain a Divine Revelation were indeed dictated by the Spirit of God and that they constitute as a Revelation the only rule of our conduct and the only rule of our faith."[1]

This in effect concludes the first part of the essay. The second part deals with the difficulty raised by those writers -- and here Thomas Chalmers is uppermost in the mind -- "who have treated of one branch [of evidences] not only to the disparagement but almost to the exclusion of the other".[2]

We remember that Chalmers, in his book of 1815, had held that almost all of the argument on the basis of the Internal Evidences was superfluous and should best be omitted; we also saw that he understood that this meant paying much less attention to Natural Theology. And, of course, this was the very reason that Milligan, generally following Mearns and the faculty at St. Mary's, saw a great danger in such a radical procedure.

> "For if the Internal Evidence is to be set aside, upon what principles must this be done? It must either be because reason is not competent or because it is not entitled to sit in judgment on the information communicated. If reason then be not competent to sit in judgment upon the doctrines and precepts of Scripture, there seems to be no principle upon which we can admit that any confidence can be placed in our conclusions as to what are considered established truths of natural Religion. Both the phenomena of nature and the discoveries of the Bible are presented to us as effects for the production of which some adequate cause must have existed. It has been already seen that the greatest masters of philosophy deduce from the former the existence and attributes of the Almighty, while the latter, bearing the impress of the same great Author, though extending what was before confined and enlightening much that was previously dark, equally show forth the signs of his infinite wisdom and goodness. If then we cannot deduce this conclusion in the latter case neither can we do it in the former. And if this is to

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1. Ibid. p. 54; See Appendix Note I.
2. Ibid. p. 55.

> be acknowledged; if we are to flee from the defence of Natural Religion as a fortress which can never be defended, then indeed may we exclaim 'nulla salus bello'. Let the advocate of Christianity lay down his arms and bid the adversaries of faith advance to triumph. There remains no resting place where his strength may be recruited, no rallying point which can be still held out. The whole fabric of Christianity passes away. By subverting the one [Internal Evidence] we destroy the other [External Evidence]".[1]

Having pointed out the consequences if the Internal Evidences are set aside on the assumption that reason is not competent or not entitled to sit in judgment on the information in Scripture, Milligan then considers the advantages that are lost if the Internal Evidences are laid aside as simply useless.

In the first place, only the intellectual faculties of the mind are convinced and its moral perceptions remain unsatisfied.

> "We lay before the Deist the sealed volume of Christianity, we call his attention to the testimony of numberless witnesses that its contents are Divine, we point out the circumstances under which the testimony was given and persevered in, the perils which the witnesses had to endure in consequence of their firmness, their perseverance in danger and even in death; we tell him of the miracles that were wrought to establish it and of the clear undeniable prophecies which it contains, we bid him look around at the rapid progress which it made in the midst of the most unprecedented opposition, we compare with this the advance made by other religious systems though promulgated under circumstances much more favourable, and by all we convince him that there is in this something more than human agency. Is, we ask, even under these circumstances, the proof complete?...Let the External Evidence be ever so convincing, the Deist could not be expected to declare his readiness to embrace Christianity till he knows what Christianity is".[2]
>
> In the second place, by discarding the Internal Evidences, "we can no longer urge upon the sceptic the strict analogy which subsists between the order of nature and the dispensation of grace. It is impossible to show him how strictly the grand features of the laws of nature are maintained, though these laws are extended and rendered clearer, or how probable

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1. Milligan, Essay on Evidences, pp. 56-58.
2. Ibid. pp. 58, 59.

> it is that creatures by his own admission perhaps destined for immortality should be informed of the conditions upon which the blessedness is bestowed."[1]

Even the moral precepts of Scripture are deprived of the superior sanctions which also strengthen the law of nature.

The Deist who is also given the internal evidence is enabled to be like

> "the philosopher who knows the general laws which his successive discoveries establish and is enabled at once to refer to its proper conclusion each fact which might otherwise prove but one of an undigested shapeless mass."[2]

In the third place, according to Milligan, if the Internal Evidence is rejected, then what has long been considered a strong objection against Christianity remains unanswered. The claim that Revelation is not needed cannot be answered by comparing it to the productions of paganism, as was attempted in Milligan's first Essay. And so it turns out that, until Christianity is established by such methods as these, atheism is the only system worth believing in.

> "It may be difficult to persuade the Deist that Christianity is true, but how shall he be convinced who denies the plainest principles of reason, the convictions of conscience and the evidence of sense?" "If then it has in any degree appeared that by denying the legitimacy of the Internal Evidence we overthrow the system of Natural religion and by consequence the whole fabric of Revealed, or that (while we acknowledge it to be a just argument) by rejecting it as useless and unnecessary we lost many important advantages, it will also follow that in any system of the Evidences the branch we have been considering is entitled to hold a high and an important place."[3]

Milligan then moves to show that if the apologist is deprived

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1. Milligan, Essay on Evidences, pp. 60, 61.
2. Ibid. p. 63.
3. Ibid. p. 65.

of the use of External Evidences -- as he must be deprived, if the principles of Natural Theology are spurned -- the central and most useful argument for the truth of Christianity is thereby relinquished.

> "We cannot indeed well conceive any other way by which a religion could be at first established than by miracles. They form the credential by which a messenger from God is distinguished from an ordinary and self-authorised individual. Being the indubitable signs of the working of Him who is the Lord of nature, there is probably almost no one in the fair exercise of his judgment who, if he were to see a miracle wrought before his eyes, would not acknowledge with Nicodemus (John 3:2). John 5:36; 6:30 and Mt. 11:5."[1]

These words of Milligan, indicating an almost demonstrative nature of the evidence of Miracles, point to the crucial part in the argument of the evidentialists, both of the "Natural Theology" school and of the viewpoint represented by Thomas Chalmers, especially the latter. Of course, the phrase, 'one in the fair exercise of his judgment', is the operative phrase. In any event, we know that many who saw the miracles of Jesus did not believe. It is this fact that led Chalmers later to alter somewhat his view of natural theology and, likewise, was involved in the change of Milligan's whole approach to the field of the Evidences, as will be made apparent in a later chapter.

But, to return to the argument of the essay, we are told that there is an appearance of greater certainty connected with the argument from miracles,

> "for we deal not with the doctrines of God but with the testimony of men, and there is often probably to fallen nature a greater degree of satisfaction in examining that evidence which does not bring constantly to view the sublime doctrines of Christianity, the pure precepts which it inculcates and the spotless virtue which it enjoins."[2]

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1. Ibid. p. 65.
2. Ibid. pp. 65,66.

It may be worth noting that we have illustrated above the tendency to see within Scripture, itself given from heaven, the doctrines as the divinity of Scripture and the various testimonies therein as the humanity of it. In this way we see the effect of the Deists' criticism: a distinction is beginning to be made -- somehow within the dogmatic whole of the Work of God -- between the divinely given and the historical-human. And, of course, the trend simply continues to converge upon the person of Christ, who had been subordinated to Scripture and ultimately, as this entire essay illustrates, to the constitution of man, the judge of Scripture. Nevertheless, we seem to detect within the argument of the young apologist that dialectical tension between the abstract-man-centred view of natural theology and the equally abstract-God-centred view of Revelation, both seeking to find themselves in the God-man.

> "Mankind look for claims to works of a miraculous nature, which claims they must believe before they will be persuaded that the religion is true in support of which these works are performed, and when we consider the matter more attentively, works of this kind appear to be necessary as the outward symbols of a Divine Commission. John 5:31, 'If I bear witness of myself my witness is not true'...The External Evidence establishes our conclusions on much surer ground, and while the Internal Evidences may only give a very high probability, the External may amount to a positive proof."[1]

It is interesting to note that to the extent that the evidentialist is led to argue from historical testimony, even though that testimony is allegedly based on the principles of the natural understanding, the true foundation seems more and more to be somehow related to and grounded in the historical itself. And it is in

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1. Ibid. pp. 68, 69.

this direction that the development of Milligan's theology proceeds.

> "Besides, we are farther to reflect that at the time when Christianity was published the Internal Evidence could not with many possess much force. Nor could its strong similarity to the law of nature avail it much, for this religion was then in a very depraved and corrupted state and before it could be restored to its proper purity it would have to call in the aid of that faith which at a later period it is brought to establish."[1]

Notice how in the next quotation, however, in spite of the apparently essential part the historical plays in the process, Christianity is still equated only with the doctrines of Scripture and the historical is kept in its merely instrumental role.

> "There was needed therefore something external to Christianity [my emphasis] before it could produce any great impression upon those to whom it was addressed, something which could make a bold and direct appeal to the sense of the people and which could be felt in its full force by the utmost depravity and the darkest mental blindness. Miracles accordingly were the signs shown to them and the wisdom of the choice appears by its effect. The people were amazed; they glorified God, and followed Jesus everywhere."[2]

Not all of Christianity -- i.e. the doctrinal content thereof -- is susceptible to proof from reason and natural religion. There are the doctrines of

> "our redemption by the blood of Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, the resurrection of the body, and the sacraments. These truths are properly said to be revealed because previous to Revelation we could have no conception of them and for these, miracles are necessary. Analogical reasoning may indeed give them a high probability, but they cannot in this manner be positively proved. Some of them indeed can hardly even be said to be probable, for even after we are fully convinced of their truth we are unable to comprehend them. Something accordingly which bears upon it the unquestionable stamp of the Divine powers must be employed to establish them, and nothing can be more conclusive than a miracle which being

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1. Milligan, Essay on Evidences, p. 69.
2. Ibid. p. 69.

> 'a sign not to them which believe but to them that believe not' (I Cor. 14:22), most clearly impresses upon all the conviction that they are Divine."[1]

Though all of the evidences, external and internal, work together in the apologetic cause of Christianity, it is the evidence of miracles that spearheads the argument and effects the proof.

> "The adverse circumstances...under which Christianity appeared and which we have already considered would but for the miracles of its teachers and the power of the Spirit have overwhelmed it in its earliest infancy. The miracles formed the best method of attracting the attention of those who witnessed them, of thus exciting their curiosity and inducing them to respect the messenger at the same time. They were the shortest and most expeditious proofs which could be adopted, requiring no long arguments and no regular deductions from their correspondence with other facts, and they could at once be comprehended by the meanest and most uninformed ('except God were with him'). The External Evidence then on the whole is founded on a most indubitable principle."[2]

William Milligan then reminds us that what is involved is an apology addressed to the Deist as inquirer. The 'point of contact' with the Deist is not a point at all but a broad front, or basis, shared by the Christian apologist -- and the Deist. That common basis includes man's reason, the received idea of nature, and the principles of Natural Religion. These principles are: that God exists, that God is one, that He rewards those who seek Him, that He is the governor of the universe, and that men are God's special creatures related to Him, primarily through rationality. Christianity, being a new religion, requires miracles for its establishment; and "from authentic and credible records we have sufficient testimony that miracles were wrought", that prophecies were fulfilled; and in

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1. Ibid. pp. 70, 71.
2. Ibid. p. 72.

these same authentic and credible records there is an internal evidence supplementing and strengthening the whole.

> "He [the Deist] will then find stamped on the page of the Scriptures the same signatures of the Divine workmanship as in the volume of nature which he had confessed were convincing. He will see the law of nature so far from being superseded raised in importance, purified from the grossness which the superstition of ages had attached to it, illustrated by new precepts and enforced by the most powerful motives to obedience."[1]

Milligan then concludes the essay with another emphatic underlining of the epistemological foundation of the entire Christian cause; and in these concluding words we have both the genius and the weakness of the evidentialist apology.

> "But the advocate of Christianity has no cause to be afraid. The evidences of his faith are so deeply rooted in the intellectual and moral constitution of the mind that the one cannot be subverted without the overthrow of the other. Harmonies in themselves and all depending upon the clearest principles of reason, we must either receive them as conclusive or let reason share their fall. 'The foundation of God standeth sure' and the more its principles are examined the more beautiful and solid will they appear."[2]

We might well ask, "Has not man's reason already shared in the fall?" And another question might be, "Is not the demonstration that convicts and convinces the demonstration of the Spirit or the Logos, rather than any so-called logical demonstration to the fallen mind?"

Of course, to indicate that man's reason shared in man's fall is not thereby to mean that his reason is not to be used -- only that it is to be conditioned and renewed by God's own prior and objective

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1. Ibid. pp. 75, 76.
2. Ibid. pp. 78, 79.

rationality. The argument of the evidentialist, based on the foundation or constitution of the human mind, seems to imply that at least a part -- and that a most important part -- of man's rationality has been untouched or unperverted by man's sin.

C. Concluding Remarks

A more detailed critique of the federal scheme of the Westminster theology will be set forth in the last chapter. But in order to see the natural theology of Milligan's two essays in their historical context, let us now view the different approaches to natural theology and natural goodness taken by Calvin and Westminster.

According to Calvin all men know God in some way, whether or not they will to know Him; all men are aware of God. But Calvin does not identify this way of knowing with a reasoning from effect to cause, nor does he use this knowledge as a base on which to build the theology of revelation. Rather he points out that this natural knowledge of God is relativised and displaced by the revelation of the grace of God in Jesus Christ; though man's natural knowledge of God is not rejected as such, the grace of God in Christ reveals it as perverted and distorted because of man's sin. The uncreated light of God shines and reveals the whole universe as created for the glory of God; but only in Christ does this come clear. Man's sin refracts the revelatory medium of creation, distorting it and shutting out God's glory holding the truth down by a lie.

Unlike Calvin, Westminster theology gives a permanent standing to natural theology and sees it as the foundation of Revelation.

Natural theology, here, is not relativised or set aside by Revelation through grace. Rather, in much the same way as in Thomistic theology, grace merely presupposes and fulfils nature. Man fell, yes; but the inner, God-given constitution of man's nature remains intact. Common Sense philosophy viewed this constitutive element in man as the sphere of First Truths which form the basis of all reasoning, providing its axioms. Consequently, man's starting-point, even after the fall, is himself. With Calvin man's starting point must be Jesus Christ.[1]

A similar contrast characterises the Reformation and Westminster approaches to natural goodness. For Calvin all men not only know God but they also are aware of the distinction between good and evil. Indeed there are heathen who are not without virtue. But here, again, the grace of the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ sets aside this knowledge and this virtue by relativising them. And though this natural goodness is not rejected as such, it is simply called into question. In the light of the once-for-all triumph of grace in Jesus Christ all of man's natural goodness is revealed as a distortion, even as an utter depravity involving the whole man. Reformation theology viewed this depravity only in the light of sheer grace and, therefore, did not place it in a moral category. The Cross has judged the whole man, the best of men, utterly; the risen Christ, the perfect God-man, is sole judge. Here the moralistic principle of conscience, seen by the natural theology of Milligan's essays to inhere in man, is transformed into a knowing <u>with</u> the

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1. Cf. T.F. Torrance, <u>Calvin's Doctrine of Man</u>, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1957, p. 154f.

Person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Westminster theology differs from Reformed theology in viewing depravity as a moral category. This means that there is not an iota of goodness in any man. For Calvin grace totally judges even the morally good man who is outside Christ; but this is not to say that there is no moral goodness in him.[1]

In Milligan's essays Christ is set forth, for apologetic purposes, as only a man who brings a message, the rightness of which is to be judged in the light of the consciences of the men who receive the message. Here, again, the man-centred base of natural theology is disclosed.

Then, too, Milligan's essays give us the impression that all evidence is such that it becomes evidential of Revelation only through man's inferential powers rather than by finding its true interpretative center in God's own Self-evidencing to man.

To be sure, Milligan does indicate his awareness of the fact that the Holy Spirit is active in the Christian cause, for he uses once each the phrases 'the Divine energy' and 'the demonstration of the Spirit'; nevertheless, in his argument, the Holy Spirit is allowed to play only a very insignificant role in making the case for Revelation more perspicuous.

However, we are to remember that we are dealing with a development of a theology and not with the mature product. Also, we are to recall that the subjects of these essays were prescribed by the faculty, and Milligan simply used and used well what he had been

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1. Ibid. p. 169f.

taught; nor did he use it completely uncritically.

The most useful tool he had been given was the inductive method and its insistence upon the fact that man's knowledge of reality comes to him through his God-given senses -- the senses of touch, of hearing, of seeing, etc. Francis Bacon was the one who most persuasively called for this method. Through the influence of the Bible, as over against the a prioristic habit of Greek thought, Bacon had set himself to the task of inaugurating not so much a new logic as a new England. Man was not created to live in such conditions as the people, especially the poor, were enduring. Through the great Instauration, and by the method of induction, man was to have dominion over his environment, under God.

Common Sense philosophy claimed to have incorporated the inductive method; seeking to find a way in which Hume's critique of natural theology could be countered, it was led to find the answer within the human mind, and this, so it also claimed, by means of the inductive method and suggestion.

Thomas Chalmers, himself greatly impressed by the Baconian method of investigation, especially by Isaac Newton's use of it, believed that this approach was the only proper one, not only in the natural sciences but also in the science of Theology. So much does this appear to have been his belief, that it would not be too inaccurate to describe Chalmers as one who was attempting to be a kind of ecclesiastical Francis Bacon or Isaac Newton, especially as regards the handling of the Biblical evidence. And, though he had been a student of Dugald Stewart, and thus had been greatly

influenced by the Common Sense philosophy, he objected to the inward turn this philosophy had taken in reaction to Hume. For Chalmers such an introversion was counter to the spirit of the true inductive method. The Bible itself was the object of investigation, not the mind.

William Milligan must have been influenced in this direction, for we know that in spite of the antagonism to Chalmers which he had encountered at St. Mary's, he enrolled in the Divinity class in the University of Edinburgh. And there during the sessions 1841-42 and 1842-43 -- just prior to the Disruption -- William Milligan was listening to, and learning from, Thomas Chalmers.[1]

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1. Through the courtesy of Mr. C.P. Finlayson, Keeper of Mss. at the University of Edinburgh Library, where there is a copy of the class roll.

CHAPTER III

EDINBURGH AND GERMANY

In the providence of God the Reformation was a time of rediscovery of the sole sufficiency of Jesus Christ for salvation. Martin Luther's protest over indulgences (publicised by the invention of movable type) was the most noteworthy among several effects following the rediscovery of the grace of the Lord. Such was the primacy of Jesus Christ as the proper theological Object that even the Bible, through which the rediscovery was mediated, came under critical appraisal in its relation to the Analogy of Faith; and some sections were viewed as more faithful to the doctrine of justification by faith alone than others.

However, the supposed need for a present, visible, invariant rule of faith as over against the Roman authority constrained the protestants, in the words of Chillingworth, to adjure that, "The Bible, and the Bible only, is our religion". Accordingly, the seat of authority was located in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. But, inevitably, a standard of interpretation became the felt need; and different denominations -- by-products of the break-up of the Holy Roman Empire as well as of Mother Church -- drew up different confessions. The Church of Scotland had its Scots Confession and later adopted the Westminster Confession, the former being more in line with the original Reformation emphasis on Christology and the latter being what has been so aptly described as a philosophical Biblicism. The Bible itself was equated with God's Word (written); and its words and sentences came to receive the authority of plenary

inspiration. Such a failure to regard the Bible analogically in relation to Jesus Christ, the God-man, issued, at least in part, from the combined effect of the aforesaid pressure for a present, visible invariant rule of faith and Gutenberg's invention of a means of producing a uniform, repeatable, portable book.[1] By the conversion of scripture into "printure" it was made much easier to overlook the existence of the various readings from different manuscripts, and this hastened the hardening of the previously Christocentric attitude towards the Bible into a rigid, cataleptic view of mechanical -- i.e. typographic -- inspiration.

Lacking an epistemology governed by the doctrine of justification by faith, the Protestant scholastic theologians simply used what was remaining so conveniently at hand, the Aristotelean framework of logic and causality, and applied it to the given, the propositions of Revelation.[2] God was re-invested with philosophical attributes, redubbed the First Cause, and became the Basic Principle of a rigorously consistent system of doctrine. To account logically for the existential acceptance and rejection of the gospel in face of the sovereignty of God, the divine decrees were given an axiomatic

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1. M. McLuhan, The Gutenberg Galaxy, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962.
2. Herein may be discovered the strange, lingering popularity of the otherwise unoriginal logician, Peter Ramus, in the schools and universities under, among others, the Calvinistic aegis; for Ramus, riding the crest of the new print culture, had simply adapted topical logic and method to the mechanical, positional frame of typographic print. See W.J. Ong, Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1958; and Ong, Ramist Method and the Commercial Mind, article in Studies in the Renaissance, the Renaissance Society of America, New York, 1961, Vol. VIII, pp. 155-172.

position; and an attempt was made to soften the apparently arbitrary decrees by baptising natural theology as a justification for damnation.[1]

Meanwhile Francis Bacon, through his reading of the Bible, came to see man's proper destiny in this world to be an instaurational follow-up of that which was accomplished in and by Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. The incarnation of the Logos -- culminating in the exaltation of man in Jesus -- was not only the justification of man before God but the justification of the use of the induction in the service of man to the glory of God.[2]

The Royal Society followed Bacon in the use of the induction but detached it from its proper justification and regarded the method merely as the means of accounting for, if not describing, natural phenomena.[3] This interpretation reached its acme in the work of Isaac Newton, who was somewhat "left" of Bacon theologically.[4]

The early successes of natural science contributed to the rise of the Deists -- mainly English -- who, following the logico-geometric methods of Descartes and especially Spinoza, declared for the near-

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1. C.K. Robinson, Philosophical Biblicism: The Teaching of the Westminster Confession concerning God, the Natural Man, and Revelation and Authority, article in Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol. 18 No. 1. March, 1965, Oliver & Boyd.
2. To locate Bacon's Biblically inspired programme in Genesis to the exclusion of its true centre in Jesus Christ is only to miss the point and to be tempted to separate too stringently creation from redemption, or the Creator from the Redeemer; for, as a matter of fact, Bacon saw creation to be in order to redemption. See his Confession of Faith. See also Appendix, Note III.
3. H.G. Van Leuwen, The Problem of Certainty in English Thought, 1630-1690, The Hague, 1963.
4. Sir Isaac Newton, Theological Manuscripts, selected and edited by H. McLachlan, University Press, Liverpool, 1950.

or all-sufficiency of man's reason and, therefore,for a strictly rationalistic theology.

In a deistic opposition to the deists the apologists, moving from a mere justification of damnation, concocted a rationale for Revelation by an unabashed use of natural theology as a base for all theology.

The Humean critique of the principle of causality effectively routed the rationalistic deists, driving them away from rational theology and into the camp of the popularisers of natural science, such as the philosophes, for, causality or no causality, the success of natural science was there for all to see.

Similarly affected by the marvels of science, without appreciating with Bacon its real significance, the apologists sought for and found -- so they thought -- an answer to Hume's scepticism. Thomas Reid, an ordained minister in the Church of Scotland, stepped forward with the required apologetics -- i.e. a philosophy that would afford a protection to natural theology and at the same time magnify the method of induction. With such equipment the apologists could employ induction in the evidential proof of the truth of the systematized propositions of Holy Scripture. And they did so, by separating within Scripture the doctrinal from the historico-miraculous and by anchoring the justification of induction, following Reid, within the human mind, led there, allegedly, by the inductive method itself, turned in upon the mind. Within his own mind the introverted observer would detect the "intuitive" principles of causality and conscience. The former, active principle necessarily caused many

to see every phenomenon in nature as an effect, the efficient and temporally prior cause of which was to be discovered by induction; this would lead, so the argument went, to the First Cause -- God, who (or which) thereby became an Inference. The latter principle, the conscience, enabled man to distinguish right from wrong, and God from an evil spirit.

At this point Thomas Chalmers appeared on the stage. He was unwilling to follow the "common sense" reaction to Hume, chiefly because in its panic it violated both the principle of Occam's razor and the true Baconian spirit in its founding external evidence on the proliferation of internal principles, allegedly discovered in the privacy of each human mind. Attempting to be more true to the Baconian, Newtonian approach, Chalmers wrote a Christian apologetics based almost completely on the appeal to external evidence, much to the detriment of the principles of natural theology. Without seeing the induction's justification in the Word made flesh and anticipating the triumph of Newtonian science as a perfect induction, Chalmers left himself open to the incisive criticism of Thomas Mearns, who accused him of an illegitimate and dangerous undermining of the entire theological edifice.

It was George Cook, William Milligan's Professor of Moral Philosophy, who in his class taught the Common Sense philosophy in conscious and vocal opposition to Thomas Chalmers, whom he looked upon as his great opponent in the General Assembly. Milligan's two essays have shown us that he learned his lessons well, though he was not without some views of his own and a critical attitude towards some of the emphasis on the internal evidence.

In the remainder of this chapter we will be concerned with the development of William Milligan's theology in the direction of historical, textual criticism and towards some different basic presuppositions. Yet, in tracing this development, we are to be aware of the fact that there was an interval of approximately eleven years between the writing of the essays we have just investigated and the next available work from his hand. We cannot determine therefore with any great exactitude the details of his development during these years. However, to by-pass this period with no comment would be unjustifiable, for enough is known about Milligan's thinking before 1842 and after 1852 and of his career during the interim to warrant at least an attempt to plot the foci of his interests and -- to some extent -- the progression of his thought.

That Milligan's work during the two sessions at St. Mary's Divinity Hall was approved is indicated by an entry in the minutes of the presbytery of St. Andrews, dated 21 (or 31) March 1841:

> "A committee appointed to examine Mr. W. Milligan... Dr. Thompson reported that they had done [word not clear here] and were highly satisfied with him and encouraged him to prosecute his studies."[1]

A. Edinburgh

Having attended two sessions, 1839-40 and 1840-41, at St. Mary's in St. Andrews, Milligan went to Edinburgh to the University and there also he attended two sessions, 1841-42, 1842-43.[2] At this

1. These minutes are deposited in the Trinity Parish Church, St. Andrews.

2. William Milligan's name is recorded on the Roll of the Cives of the Theological Library of the University of Edinburgh Library: for the session 1841-42: "6. William Milligan, 58 India Street, Ely, Fifeshire.
43. William Milligan, 38 India Street".

time there were three professors on the Faculty of Divinity: Thomas Chalmers, Professor of Divinity; David Welsh, Professor of Divinity and Church History; and Alexander Brunton, Professor of Hebrew and Semitic Languages. Milligan's name is recorded on every extant class list of the Faculty of Divinity for the sessions 1841-42, 42-43; that is, his name appears on Chalmers' class roll for 1841-42 and on Welsh's class rolls for 1841-42, 42-43. There is one class roll for Chalmers' class for 1842-43; and there are no class rolls for Brunton's Hebrew classes for 1841-42, 42-43. Since we know that Milligan was in attendance both sessions in Edinburgh it is very likely he also attended classes for which we have no class rolls. We know too that it is possible that he served as student at the Prestonpans Church during the session 1841-42.[1]

We do not know why Milligan transferred to Edinburgh for the second half of his divinity course, but the best guess might be: because Thomas Chalmers was teaching there. Chalmers was without doubt the best known professor of that day. He had established quite a reputation in Scotland and beyond. He had made an unforgettable impact at St. Andrews; even though George Cook opposed him, his was the only name that appears in the notes of Cook's lectures -- and that several times -- other than philosophers' names. Chalmers, we will remember, had put great emphasis upon the inductive method in the science of theology. He encouraged the use of this procedure in Biblical studies, as over against its introverted use

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1. The following is the entry in the Chalmers Divinity Class roll for the session 1841-42: "William Milligan, Preston Pans".

on one's own mental processes. He had laid the stress on the use of external evidence and had deplored what he deemed to be an over-extended reliance on internal evidence. And we have seen that, though Milligan's essays were committed in the main to a use of all the evidence, both external and internal, he did side with Chalmers in the view that much of the argument from the internal evidences was a begging of the question.

For whatever reason, Milligan proceeded to Edinburgh. From what we have been able to determine from the two essays, let us recall the basic theological position held by this student upon his entering the classrooms of Thomas Chalmers and David Welsh and how he regarded the apologetic task.

Revelation was looked upon as information having to do with the salvation of men, given by God, and otherwise unobtainable. The deists had challenged this claim of revelation, which they deemed to be unnecessary; for, said they, the needed information is available otherwise -- i.e. by way of the reason. The apologetic answer involved the use of the reason against the sovereign claim of reason, in conjunction with the historical evidence. To demonstrate that reason alone is insufficient it was necessary to isolate reason -- by means of the method of exclusion -- from access to the information given by revelation. This was done by examining the productions of reason B.C., when there could have been no question of plagiarism. In this manner it was shown that reason, as far as the available evidence is concerned, was not able to give the information which revelation provides. Not only that, the different

productions of reason were shown to be contradictory and the lives of the authors and people corrupt. Thus it was demonstrated that reason by itself is not able to arrive at the same information offered by revelation, which thereby must be allowed to stand as its only source.

Let us be certain to notice that thus far it is not a question of truth but only a matter of refuting reason's claim to be an additional source of the information proferred by revelation. The procedure is strictly proper, a matter of refuting or excluding illegitimate claims.

But in addition to the method of proving falsity we have seen that there is also in the armoury of the common sense apologetics taught Milligan at St. Andrews, a method of proving truth, the truth of revelation.[1]

In the Common Sense rationale, to prove anything to be true is to demonstrate that it necessarily follows from First Principles or self-evident axioms. These principles or axioms are themselves propositions -- i.e. judgments which affirm or deny something, and that in reference to something else (the subject). The principles themselves cannot be shown to follow from any more basic propositions. They are to be accepted "intuitively", but they nevertheless remain judgments.[2] They are not explicit generalisations from inductions, nor are they themselves logically demonstrable.

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1. See Appendix, Note IV.
2. See Appendix, Note I.

Experience and consciousness may suggest the principles, but nevertheless these "natural suggestions" or "judgments of nature" themselves are the basic "intuitive" units or building blocks of the scientific system. Any attempt to analyse these judgments involves an abstraction from the given. Any perceived phenomenon implies not only the existence of a perceiving subject but also an adequate cause for the existence of the phenomenon. A bare suggestion, or an immediate experience, is in itself an abstraction from the evidential judgment, the act of judgment itself being basic. Here we have the basis of all natural philosophy. The self, the judgment-making ego, is in the centre. Every phenomenon is necessarily seen as evidence not only of something else but of a temporally prior cause. Thus the self is contemporaneous only with a phenomenon, an effect -- an immediate personal confrontation with another person, human or divine, thereby being precluded. By inference only is God known as First Cause. The Fall might have thrown a shadow over the natural light of reason. Yet there are the basic intuitive judgments which have remained unaltered and fundamental and by which everything else must be judged -- even Revelation; for Revelation, as information, must be articulated within a propositional framework and must therefore be amenable to judgments of nature and the laws of thought, all of which make up the intuitive evidence, providing the principles from which all demonstration must proceed.

We can see how Revelation, the Word of God written, was affected by such an approach, especially in the matter of inspiration.

The orthodox view in the nineteenth century, before and even after criticism was applied to the Gutenberg mentality, was that of plenary verbal inspiration. Every word was God-breathed and was therefore true. But then what was left for the apologist to say? To state that the Bible is true because God is true and the Bible is God's Word is to leave very little for the defender of the faith to do; there would be nothing left but to become a missionary in obedience to the divine commission, or the opposite.' The only escape from this dilemma was to prove that the Bible is God's Word, not primarily by reference to God's Word, but by reference to man's mind. To effect this kind of apology Revelation in its essence can no longer be identified with the entirety of God's Word but only with the doctrinal content of the Bible. The history within the Bible, the miracles (including the resurrection of Jesus Christ), the witness to and propagation of the gospel, narrated within the Scriptures, were all regarded as external to Revelation, as external evidence of the truth of Revelation. In this way Revelation was gradually squeezed dry of the historical, flesh and blood, personal, existential, incarnational particularity of the gospel and was left a bare system of doctrine, the principles of which were to be found in Everyman. Thus the Logos was dis-incarnated and re-Platonised. A purely rational, a priori principle, the principle of causality, was used to prop up the entire proof, and that in such a way as to give the impression that the inductive spirit guided and controlled the whole movement. This makeshift was what the Common Sense apology, formulated by Thomas Reid, fell back upon when confronted

by the critique of Hume and his contention that the so-called principle of causality was simply a product of custom, devoid of necessity. The apologetics taught Milligan at St. Andrews was the result of an anxious attempt to prove truth with the help of natural theology. The theologians had turned from the demonstration of the Spirit to the machinations of their own minds. The truth as centred in Jesus Christ, the truth of being, ("I am the truth") had been forsaken. From the guidance of the Son's witness to the Father through the Holy Spirit man had leaped to the fray brandishing the introverted instrument of his own reason.

Now Thomas Chalmers, to whom Milligan had turned, had criticised what he had deemed to be the over-extended use of natural theology, especially in its employment of internal evidence in the argument for the truth of Revelation.[1] Such a criticism, probably inspired by the reading of Bacon and Newton, was definitely against the Moderate stream. The reactions on the part of George Cook and Thomas Mearns we have seen reflected in Milligan's second essay. Each side was right for different reasons and wrong for the same reason. Chalmers was right for putting the emphasis on external evidence and for holding that too much was claimed for natural theology; he was wrong in not seeing that natural theology is relativised and set aside by the grace of the revelation of Christ. Mearns and Cook were right in pointing out that, if the internal proof is dropped, then the external proof must also be abandoned, because the means of proving

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1. T. Chalmers, The Evidence and Authority of the Christian Revelation, second edition, William Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1815.

truth - the principle of causality and therefore natural theology - was undermined. They were wrong in being anxious over such a loss.

1. Thomas Chalmers

Let us now consider some of the aspects of Thomas Chalmers' teaching that could hardly have failed to impress and influence Milligan, in spite of what must have been the surprise that was in store for him when he learned that Chalmers had reconsidered his predilections against natural theology and had adopted a much more appreciative regard towards it.

a. The Outward Look

Chalmers recognised the difficulty and danger involved in seeking to look in upon the mind in order to discover there certain principles, and he taught at length that it is not necessary for anyone to know those principles in order to live and work effectively:

> "...though man knows not the processes of that complex economy by which it is that he moves and feels and thinks, it is not necessary that he should, in order either to move aright, or to feel aright, or even to think aright."[1]

The essential rightness of the outward look, away from the self and towards the object, was impressed upon his students by Chalmers:

> "The truth is, that often when man is most alive to the sense of what is duteous and incumbent, it is not to himself that he looks --- but to a fellowman, whether an applicant for justice or charity, who at the time is present to his sight, or to God the sovereign claimant of piety and of all righteousness, who at the time is present to his thoughts. So that all the while he may have been looking outwards to an object and never once have cast an introverted view upon himself, the subject. He may have been looking objectively or forth of himself, and never subjectively or towards himself. He may have taken in a right

1. T. Chalmers, Evidence of the Christian Revelation, Thomas Constable, Edinburgh, 1855, p. 5.

> sensibility from the object that is without him, and have been practically urged thereby in a right direction. There has been a real inward process in consequence -- but the process has only been described or undergone; it has not been attended to. The organ whether of feeling or of perception may be justly impressed with the object; and meanwhile all consciousness of the organ is suspended. It is precisely like the man who can see rightly that which is before him, although he should never think of the eye's retina, nor be aware of its existence... this distinction has not been enough adverted to -- between a knowledge of the objects of science, and a knowledge of the faculty by which these objects are perceived or judged of."[1]

Our ability to discriminate rather than confound was to Chalmers the basis of correct scientific thinking:

> "...what we have long regarded as the true account or philosophy of the process described by the human mind in the formation of abstract and general ideas. The truth is, that our disposition to generalise by noticing the points of resemblance between different objects, often takes the precedency of our disposition to specialise by noticing their points of distinction or dissimilarity -- and so, at the commencement of our mental history, we are liable to confound when we ought to discriminate. The observation, rightly applied, will be found to correct both the philosophy of Dr. Campbell [the apologetic multiplication of principles in answer to Hume's criticism] and the scepticism of Hume on the subject of human testimony."[2]

Whether or not he learned the importance of looking for distinctions in evidence from Chalmers, it was just such a distinction that underlies Milligan's thematic proposition in his best known book, The Resurrection of Our Lord. He must have received much of Chalmers' teaching as an antidote to counteract some of the instruction he had absorbed at St. Andrews. It must have been just this distinctive difference between looking in upon the mind and looking out to the object that impressed Milligan in Chalmers' class, for with Milligan it was the external evidence that must first be thoroughly investigated

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1. Ibid. pp. 6,7.
2. Ibid. p. 29.

before the drawing of a conclusion is warranted. Chalmers taught him:

> "The truth is that a man may have put forth his understanding with wisdom and with a warrantable confidence on every other department of human knowledge -- and yet be a stranger to that one department, the knowledge of his own intellectual processes. In a word, the understanding may understand everything but itself -- we mean everything that is within the circle of our mental acquisitions. We may work well with an instrument, though we do not attend to the workings of the instrument. We do not first look to the instrument of thought, and then to the objects of thought... We investigate without one thought of the investigating mind -- just as to ascertain the visible properties of what which is before it, the eye, instead of looking to itself, looks openly and directly forth of itself, and on the outer field of contemplation."[1]

It was surely in this direction that Thomas Chalmers exerted his most beneficial influence upon his students, and it is strange that such a vision did not lead him to see in the object of theological observation, Jesus Christ, the sole, sufficient starting point and interpretative centre for all theology.

Chalmers was aware that what is called science is the compound interaction of the subject, or the investigator, and the object of investigation, but that, even so, it is not necessary to look "reflexly" upon the mind, for in doing so the object is lost and one sees within only the dying effect of the previous encounter:

> "The love is felt when it is not reflected upon -- and why? because the mind is otherwise employed -- even in gazing on that which is lovely. And again when it is reflected upon it is not felt -- and why? because the lovely object is then out of view -- the mind having turned away from it to look at the impression which it maketh upon itself. But then the impression fades into evanescence, even by the momentary leave which the mind takes of the object -- and can only be renewed again by another visit as it were, by an act of recurrence that shall again bring the mind and the object into contact."[2]

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1. Ibid. pp. 7, 8.
2. T. Chalmers, The Works of ... , Wm. Collins. Vol. 5, pp. 64, 65.

The interesting and inspiring point here is that Chalmers taught this same edifying perspective in relation to Christianity.

> "This distinction between the objective and the subjective is of main use and application in Christianity. Here, if anywhere it is to the objective that the subjective owes, if not its being, at least its aliment ... The objective is the fountainhead of the subjective. It is by looking outwardly on the love of God to us, that we are made to feel inwardly a love to God back again. It is the view of his good will which awakens our gratitude; of his greatness which owes and solemnises us into deepest reverence ... In other words, the mind to obtain a right state, or rectify itself, must go forth of itself."[1]

> "To establish within him a right faith, he must look, not within him, to the act of faith; but openly and outwardly to Christ, the object of faith."[2]

Yet, with all this emphasis on the outward look to the object, there remained in Chalmers' teaching the inward inspection of the mind. The impression is given at times that the mind must be studied and that the best way to study it is by first looking outward at the proper object and then quickly turning back to the mind before the impression fades. But why this need to turn in upon one's mind at all?

b. The Conscription of Conscience

Though Chalmers criticised the tendency towards a prolonged introspection and the multiplication of principles on the part of Reid and Campbell, he nevertheless continued to linger in this twilight zone himself. He disagreed with the claim that the principle of causality is found within the mind, but he himself called it an instinct with which we are all born. He, too, in his way sought to

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1. Ibid. pp. 77, 78.
2. Ibid. p. 81.

counter Hume's argument by agreeing with Hume's claim that such a principle is not found in experience and by disagreeing that the sense is merely made strong by experience without ever attaining to the status of principle. For Chalmers, man's belief in "the constancy of nature", being an instinct, is just as strong in infancy as it is in maturity. The only difference is that by experience one learns or should learn to distinguish the causal antecedents from the merely casual ones. And it is this very instinct and the use of experience in relation to it that enabled Chalmers to apply what to him was a correction to the scepticism of Hume and also to the tendency of the Common Sense school to multiply principles in order to prove the truth of testimony. And this "correction" was Chalmers' answer to the criticism of Thomas Mearns (whom Milligan had quoted in his second essay), who, we remember, accused him of destroying natural theology by emphasising only the external evidence, to the detriment of the internal, and therefore also to the undermining of the principle of casuality and the natural theology based on it. But in effect Chalmers only substituted man's instinct for the causal principle of man's mind. Through his study of Bacon and Newton, he had come to suspect that not all the claims of natural theology are valid; however -- and here perhaps the influence of Bishop Butler won out -- he never denied the view that it had a definite usefulness. Indeed, by the time Milligan had come to study under him, Chalmers' belief in the necessity of natural theology had grown much stronger, and that in reaction to one question he had had to face.

Chalmers had seen the miracles of Christianity as the strongest

evidence for the truth of its doctrines, but he had to ask himself the very same question that Milligan had asked and answered in his second essay, and he answered it in the very same way. The question was, "How shall we be sure of a miracle being a voucher of a messenger from God?" For all we know, a miracle might be the work of a powerful, evil spirit.

> "It is on the adjustment of this question that the English writers on miracles have expended, we think, the most of their strength; and, while in Scotland, the great labour has been to dissipate the sophistries of Hume and so to vindicate the Christian miracles as sufficiently ascertained facts -- in the sister kingdom it has been, admitting as facts, to vindicate them as real credentials from the God of heaven, and so as competent vouchers for that system of religion wherewith they are associated."[1]

To hold that God is the only author of the miracles reported in the Bible is to overlook, for example, the feats of the Egyptian magicians and the demoniacal possessions. It is not in the spirit of either Bacon or Butler to come to the Bible with presuppositions that call for the acceptance of only those facts that fit the theory. Chalmers' answer to the problem was that one must come to the Bible with the a priori conception of the righteousness of God, given by natural religion. His confession is as follows:

> "We are aware that in this view of the matter a previous natural religion would seem to be indispensable; whereas in the other view of it, the whole credit and authority that belong to the Christian religion would have their primary fountainhead in the proper and peculiar evidences of revelation. Miracles, simply as such, and without regard to adjuncts at all, were enough, in all conceivable circumstances, to authenticate any professed communication from God to the world. The historical evidences for these miraculous facts were enough of themselves to constitute a simple but solid foundation on which to rest the whole superstructure of our creed. We confess our partiality, in other days, to what we held as a beautiful and consistent

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1. T. Chalmers, Evidence of the Christian Revelation, Edinburgh, 1855, p. 230.

> exemplification between us and infidels. There is nothing, however, which has contributed more to modify our views upon this subject than the very question whereof we now treat. Instead of holding all religion as suspended on the miraculous evidence we see this evidence itself standing at the bar of an anterior principle, and there waiting for its authentication. There is a previous natural religion on whose aid we call for the determination of this matter. It is an authority that we at one time should have utterly disregarded and condemned, but now hold in higher reverence, since, reflecting on the supremacy of conscience within us, we deem this to be the token of an ascendent principle of morality and truth in the universe around us."[1]

There is the confession. How it must have surprised Milligan and, at the same time, how it must have confirmed him in his own view - to have had the best known professor in the land confess that he had been wrong and adopt a view almost identical with one's own!

Thus conscience clears the way for the proper effect of the evidence of the miracle. Be it noted, however, that within this particular context, Jesus is regarded simply as a messenger claiming to have a message from God, and the Holy Spirit seems to have no part at all.[2]

c. Scripture Criticism

Though he continued to hold to the then orthodox doctrine of plenary verbal inspiration, Chalmers encouraged his students to use the inductive method in scripture criticism. There was the matter of the various readings, and Chalmers was not a man who dodged facts.

We will recall that the King's Commissioners had questioned the faculty at St. Mary's Divinity Hall in St. Andrews in regard to their

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1. Ibid. pp. 235, 236.
2. See Appendix, Note V.

bringing the fact of the various readings of Scripture to the attention of their students. We can surmise from their answers that the fact of such variation in the fixation on the printed text was only natural among men who -- with all their learning -- were not aware of the change movable type brought about in its replacement of the manuscript. Men are prone to regard that which is printed as somehow above criticism; and when the Bible in all the exact repetition of multitudinous copies, based on the Textus Receptus and Authorized, made its appearance before men, it was not long before it was regarded as completely removed from criticism. Gradually, however, the criticism that had begun to be applied to the classical texts was trained on the Biblical manuscripts because of the undeniable existence and new discoveries of various readings.

We recognise that the historical spirit was a distinctive mark of the nineteenth century; and in the aura of this spirit the very existence of the documentary surds cried out for explanation, in spite of the embarrassment it might be to the sentential approach to Revelation. If only the words in their propositional relationship to one another are regarded as Revelation -- as over against the Object to which they testify and to whom they stand as testimony -- then any variation in the wording could prove a stumbling block to the reception of Revelation and tend to bring about panic among those who hold such a view.

Thomas Chalmers was not a victim of panic, for his education in the beneficence of induction had enabled him to be ready for the exposure of the existence of the various readings; but he was not without a sense of uneasiness because of his view of inspiration.

He faced the problem, and the result is given in a lengthy chapter in his Institute of Theology.[1] The import of this chapter may be stated as follows:

We have nothing to fear from Scripture criticism as long as orthodoxy and scholarship are combined. The Spirit is the interpreter of the Word. The Scripture critics are the Gibeonites of the Christian Church, the hewers of wood and drawers of water to the children of Israel. The philologists and grammarians provide the Scriptural facts; and the theologians, within the grammatical and historical context, interpret -- the Spirit aiding them -- these propositions of Scripture. Thus they build upon the blocks of the Scriptural facts [and it is well to note that the "facts" are the propositions of the architectonic structure of systematic theology]. The theologians are never to go beyond the facts. And here it is that the scripture critic has his appointed function; he locates for the theologians the basic units of judgment, given in that which most nearly approaches the autographs. Upon these fundamental units the theologians are called to exercise their hermeneutical skills. The reason that we have nothing to fear from such textual criticism is that, even though the critics might continue to be supplied with newly discovered variant readings, no correction yet has necessitated any material alteration in the basic doctrines of the Church; and each additional correction seems to carry even less weight than the previous one in regard to its creating any necessity of such a change:

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1. T. Chalmers, Institute of Theology, Sutherland and Knox, Edinburgh, 1849, Vol. I, pp. 277-328.

> "Time may run indefinitely on, as does an asymptote, and yet the absolute similarity of a version to the original may never be attained -- though like as the asymptote to its hyperbola there may constant and successive approaches be making towards it. There will always be some minute and microscopic, though ever-lessening distance from perfection, and room, therefore, to the end of the world, for the exercise of a philology all the more refined and arduous, as it comes nearer to that point which it shall not overtake: yet who does not see that just in proportion to this excess of labour and exquisiteness of skill, will be the insignificance of its results? And meanwhile though an infinity of marvelous achievements by criticism remain to be performed, the materials of theology, whether for being philosophised into a system or constructed into a directory of life and conduct, are already in our hands."[1]

Thomas Chalmers was aware of the rightful place of criticism and encouraged it:

> "I cannot too often reiterate that we invite and would be satisfied with the very same treatment of the documentary evidence for the facts of the evangelical narrative that is bestowed on all other history, and that on the principles of our received and ordinary criticism.
>
> [We shall learn that Milligan put a great emphasis on the proper principles of criticism]
>
> The defenders of Christianity have failed in not holding out a more bold and decided front to their adversaries."[2]

Chalmers believed that the study of Scripture criticism was needed primarily as a defence of right doctrine -- especially so as over against the higher criticism of the German "neologists":

> "But while a perverse though highly elaborate and erudite Scripture criticism has given birth or rather countenance to Neology, and by the weight of authority has made it formidable -- yet it is Scripture criticism after all.... that is the proper, the rightful, and withal the most effectual instrument for the overthrow of its pretensions and its power."[3]

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1. Ibid. pp. 298, 299. Was not Chalmers aware of what two theologians of different "Schools" could do with the same text?
2. Ibid. p. 249.
3. Ibid. p. 323.

It would seem then that Milligan must have received in Chalmers' classroom definite encouragement to pursue the study of the science of textual criticism, in which he became so adept.

2. David Welsh.

a. Colleague and Traveller

Professor David Welsh taught Milligan for two sessions -- 1841-42, 42-43. That Chalmers was responsible for Welsh's appointment to the Chair of Church History in the University of Edinburgh, should indicate that the theology of these two men did not differ greatly:

"London, 29th September, 1931.

My dear Dr. Chalmers,

> We have deferred to your high authority, and finally agreed to appoint Mr. Welsh. We rely implicitly on your estimate of the man, and feel...that it was impossible to refuse the most gifted teacher of theology of our age the choice of the individual whom he so decidedly preferred as his associate in the University where he presides over these studies."[1]

That Chalmers and Welsh did think along very similar lines is corroborated by the following:

> "With Dr. Chalmers, Professor of Divinity, whose sentiments generally coincided so entirely with his [i.e., Dr. Welsh's] own, his intercourse was constant, and the source of mutual delight; and with Dr. Brunton [who taught Hebrew], though differing from him in opinion on subjects of ecclesiastical policy [Dr. Brunton remaining in the Church of Scotland following the Disruption in 1834], he maintained a close interchange of mind."[2]

Though Welsh also had his roots in the common sense philosophy,

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1. W. Hanna, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Chalmers, Sutherland and Knox, Edinburgh, 1851, Vol. III, pp. 307, 308.
2. A. Dunlop, A memoir (of David Welsh) included in Sermons by the Late David Welsh, D.D., W.P. Kennedy, Edinburgh, 1846, p. 51.

his movement was steadily away from the perverted use of induction towards its right employment.

The first book David Welsh published was a biography of the philosopher-physician Dr. Thomas Brown,[1] with whom he had enjoyed a very close relationship both as a student and afterwards. That Thomas Brown, though differing in some respects from both Reid and Stewart, had been influenced by the Common Sense School is indicated by what he considered to be the great object of the metaphysician: to analyse and classify the phenomena of the mind; and this he did in great detail. Welsh believed that it was Brown's most significant contribution to have established that the powers of the mind are in reality nothing but the mind itself existing in different states (!?).

That Welsh himself was influenced by Brown's philosophy is revealed in the following:

> "Dr. Brown, having triumphantly established that we neither perceive power nor discover it by reasoning, resolves our belief in it into intuition [my emphasis], the only source, besides perception and reasoning, of belief. Here it is that Dr. Brown differs from Mr. Hume, who as is well known, traces the origin of the idea of power to custom."[2]

It must have appeared to Welsh that Brown had covered the mental territory by his introspective philosophy:

> "But among those who take an interest in those highest speculations of human ingenuity, where the mind returns upon itself [my emphasis] and philosophises upon the principles of its philosophising, it [Brown's essay of Causation, which

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1. D. Welsh, Account of the Life and Writings of Thomas Brown, M.D., Late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, W. and C. Tait, Edinburgh, 1825.
2. Ibid. p. 126. Chalmers accepted Brown's analysis of the "instinct" of causality.

> Chalmers highly appreciated] will ever be held in the highest estimation."[1]

We are told that Welsh had intended to write a treatise on logic but that he began to concentrate more and more on the application of the inductive method to the field of Church history; and it was in this direction -- away from the introverted use of the Baconian method towards its proper use -- that he undoubtedly trained the scholarship of his students, Milligan among them. In this respect -- i.e. in his turning away from speculation and even from the propaganda for the inductive method (as practiced by Chalmers) and to an actual use of it in conjunction with various historical records -- in this respect David Welsh very likely exerted his most beneficial influence on Milligan:

> "In his lectures, and general treatment of matters that came before us in the class, we felt that we had a living illustration of the spirit of Lord Bacon's philosophy ... he presented his students with what may be counted, I believe, the best results of the most recent historical researches in Germany and elsewhere, invested with a peculiar interest to those at all accustomed to reflect, by the philosophic temperament and the analytic spirit of one trained in the method of logic, and in the inductive science of the human mind. His manner of instruction induced a more intimate search of the original authorities, and especially of the Fathers and later writers of the Church, than was, I understand, at all usual in the preceding generation of Scottish students."[2]

It is likely that it was in Welsh's class that Milligan started to think about the possibility of studying in Germany. David Welsh had already been there:

> "The movement towards Germany began in 1834, when Welsh, afterwards the last moderator of the undivided Church of

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1. Ibid. p. 133.
2. A. Dunlop, A memoir (of David Welsh), op.cit. pp. 53, 55.

> Scotland, visited some of its seats of learning[1]... Neander and Tholuck were the teachers most in request."

It was when Welsh was in Germany that he received these words from Chalmers, who very probably learned most of what he knew about German scholarship and thought from his colleague:

> "It is possible that the Continent is before us both in Church History and Exegesis. But I am inclined to think that we are before them not only in the apologetical department, but also, and most important of all, in the Doctrinal ... I verily believe that many a ploughman in Scotland is a juster, and I will add a deeper theologian, than many a Biblist in Germany ...
>
> Yet most earnest I am for a far higher Scripture criticism than is known or cultivated in Scotland. Without it a Church is wanting in a most essential equipment for the defence of the truth against heresy. I rejoice in the idea of your enriching your course next winter by the fruits of this journey."[2]

b. The Science of Church History

The course of Welsh's lectures has been described as follows:

> "It may be mentioned, that his entire course of lectures on Church History extended over a cycle of three sessions of College, and that the lectures were delivered on four days of each week. The first year's series embraced the external and internal history of the Church during the three centuries of the propagation of Christianity, till its establishment under Constantine; and part of these lectures form the substance of the published volume of his 'Elements of Church History'."[3]

In pointing his students to history, and therefore to the documents of history, Welsh emphasised the need for accuracy and objectivity on the part of the historian:

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1. J.R. Fleming, The Church of Scotland, 1843-1874, T & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1927, p. 15.
2. W. Hanna, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Chalmers, Sutherland & Knox, Edinburgh, 1851, Vol. III, pp. 438-441.
3. A. Dunlop, A Memoir, op.cit. p. 54.

> "There is no branch of study where the utmost scrupulousness of attention is more necessary, but in regard to the accuracy of references made to original authorities, and the genuineness and authenticity of the originals referred. Party spirit, bigotry, a mistaken sense of duty, carelessness, credulity, prejudice, have often been active in those who have treated the history of the Church, and they have led to the forgery of documents, to suppositious quotations, to garbled extracts, to false translations, to glosses that, while they seem to correspond to the letter, are foreign to the spirit of the original documents. Nor is this all. The original authors themselves must be perused with caution; even honest writers often stated as true what they wished to be true, others wilfully distorted facts to the disadvantage of their opponents; and the remoteness of the times, with the change that has taken place in manners and modes of thinking, renders it often a matter of difficulty to ascertain the true meaning of passages that contain a faithful account of what took place. By exercising due care, however, in ascertaining the import of original authors, and testing their statements by a reference to the other documents bearing upon the same period, there are few topics where a near approach at least may not be made to the truth."[1]

This teaching Milligan must certainly have taken to heart during his two sessions of study under Professor Welsh, for his own writings are marked by this same regard for meticulous accuracy and truth.

Notice that Welsh taught his students that history had to do not merely with documents and propositions and words but with events in (Newtonian?) time and space, for the study of which the appropriate instruments are required:

> "There are preparatory and auxiliary studies, without which the science of Church History can neither be entered upon nor prosecuted with advantage. Chronology and geography, 'the eyes of History', are not less necessary in examining ecclesiastic than civil affairs. In the strictest sense, history has to do with events in their relation to time and space."
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> And Welsh quoted Bacon to the same effect.[2]

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1. Ibid. pp. 19, 20.
2. Ibid. p. 13.

Welsh also taught that Jesus Himself was willing to appeal to the evidence of the senses:

> "But our Saviour not only demands credence on his own authority; he makes an appeal to the miracles which he wrought, in proof of his divine mission."[1]

Heeding Welsh's warning about the meaning of words, it could be that our tendency today is to regard 'proof' as meaning a logical demonstration rather than that which was originally meant, a testing, a trying; for it is certain that our Lord, in addition to being and speaking the Truth, was willing to submit Himself to the usual canons of evidence:

> "After this [Jesus' resurrection] he continued some time on earth, affording the most indubitable evidence of his identify, and of the reality of his resurrection from the dead, and instructed his disciples in the nature of the doctrine they were to teach mankind."[2]

In the historical perspective of Welsh the students were led into the realisation of a close relationship between the person of Christ and his words, between the words of the apostles and the evidence given them by Christ; in other words, a full play was given to all the senses employed in the giving and receiving and transmitting of the gospel, all in relation to Jesus' self-manifestation and his reference to Scripture:

> "But the new faith was not to 'stand by the power or wisdom' of man, and its great author 'knew whom he had chosen'. What was necessary for the propagation of the new religion, was not individuals who might over-awe by their authority, or allure to give faithful testimony to the things they had seen and heard and to point the application of ancient prophecy to present occurrences. For such duties the apostles were

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1. Ibid. p. 154.
2. Ibid. p. 138.

> sufficiently prepared. The facts of which they had been eye-witnesses did not admit of any misinterpretation; they had been taught by our Saviour himself as to the true reference of Scripture prophecy (Luke xxiv, 44, seq.), a subject which the little education they had, prepared them for understanding; their minds had been solemnised by the events [what an excellent phrase!] which had taken place -- so different from all their anticipation."[1]

William Milligan was taught that it is the study of Church history which enables theology to be more scientific:

> "The highest advantages, however, resulting from the study of Church History relate to theology as a science. It is very common with those who have long been habituated to one view of Scripture doctrine [the Westminster Confession of Faith, for instance], to look upon the system that they hold as that which must necessarily be adopted by, or rather must suggest itself to, every un-prejudiced mind, and that we have little more to do with other and preceding systems than to examine how far they coincide with our own as the only true standard. Nothing, however, can be more erroneous ... The science of theology is in the strictest sense an historical phenomenon."[2]

Thus in Welsh's class there was an impulse in the direction of history, away from any merely static system of "Scripture truth" and away from the study of Scripture in isolation from all other historical documents:

> "... many look upon the greater part of the details of ecclesiastical history as utterly useless; while it is conceived, that even in its best pages nothing more is gained, than a pleasing or pious exercise, from which the theologian can learn no truth in his sacred science which he might not have attained by other means. In opposition to this idea, I conceive that there are many truths which nothing but the history of the Church can teach us, and that however great a man's powers may be, however sincere his piety, however intense his application to other departments of professional learning, if he is unacquainted with Church history, he must be ill instructed in systematic theology; and that, in polemical divinity, he cannot be prepared for taking the field against the new forms of error that continually present themselves, or for contending for the faith

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1. Ibid. p. 171.
2. Ibid. pp. 22, 23.

> once delivered to the saints.
>
> The principle on which this error is founded is the same with that which was first proposed by sincere, though mistaken piety, viz., that the reading of the Scriptures may supersede all other study."[1]

One way of relaxing the fixation imposed by the closed system of an isolated Bible, a moralistic, scholastic doctrine and a rigidly structured church is to see them in the total context of the history of the Church. Another way is to teach that mission is a normal, healthy aspect of the life of the Church. Welsh chose both ways:

> "While faithful men had been appointed for confirming and enlarging the different communities as they were formed, a separate office was not instituted for propagating the gospel where it was not already known; this was left to the free workings of the Christian spirit under the divine commandment, 'Preach the gospel to every creature'. In this arrangement the wisdom under which the apostles acted was conspicuously displayed. The Spirit of the gospel is essentially missionary; to secure therefore its permanence where once introduced, is to secure its further enlargement." [my emphasis][2]

An historical consciousness, a meticulous accuracy, and a missionary spirit, such were the strong emphases under the teaching of David Welsh, who added to these, even if not known by his students, a weekly prayer for each member of his classes.

INTERLUDE: HAPPENINGS, DECISIONS AND INFLUENCES

We should now consider the fact that the year in which William Milligan completed his studies at Edinburgh, 1843, was also the year of the Disruption, and that two-thirds of the faculty of Divinity -- i.e. Chalmers and Welsh -- walked out of the Church of

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1. Ibid. pp. 424, 425.
2. Ibid. p. 249.

Scotland to take leading parts in the establishing of the Free Church. David Welsh, the last Moderator of the undivided Church, led the walk-out, and became Professor of Church History in the newly created Free Church college of Divinity, New College. Chalmers was the first Principal and Professor of Divinity. Surely William Milligan was aware of the trends in the church politics of his day, and it is very likely his was not an easy decision to remain in the Church of Scotland.

We learn how Milligan's father, as well as the majority of his presbytery, felt about the church question from the following entry in the minutes of St. Andrews presbytery, dated 5 May, 1841:

> "Mr. Milligan brought forward the motion of which he had given notice that the Presbytery should overture the General Assembly for the repeal of the Veto Act. Motion carried."[1]

The significance of this vote is apparent when we understand the background.

> "The fall of the Moderate party at that time [George Cook and Co.] from power after more than a hundred years' supremacy coincided almost exactly with the first coming of democracy in the State.
>
> The Assembly of 1832 was the last in which they had a decided majority. Even then there were signs that a movement in favour of giving efficacy to the call of the People was well on its way towards success. In 1833 the principle of the Veto was first proposed by Dr. Chalmers -- 'That no minister be intruded into any pastoral charge contrary to the will of the congregation, and that the dissent of the majority of the male heads of families resident within the parish ought to be of conclusive effect in setting aside the nominee of the patron'. This motion was lost by the narrow margin of 12...[defeated on a motion of George Cook]. All this foreshadowed the legislation of 1834. The Veto was passed into an Act."[2]

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1. These minutes are deposited in the Trinity Parish Church, St. Andrews.
2. J.R. Fleming, The Church in Scotland, 1843-1874, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1927, pp. 19, 20.

And it was this Veto Act, first proposed by Chalmers, which St. Andrews presbytery, on a motion put by Milligan's father, had overtured to repeal.

That William Milligan's decision was not easy and that it was theologically oriented are shown by a portion of a letter he wrote to his father about a year after the Disruption:

> "I feel convinced in my own mind that I do hold the great principle of Christ's Headship over His Church in its full extent, and am prepared to vindicate it at all hazards... In thus resolving to remain in, I trust I am not actuated by worldly considerations, for I think that I could at once renounce all temporal advantages of my present situation [minister of the Cameron Church, Fife]. I am sure that I am prepared to follow wherever the path of duty clearly appears to point, and I am sure that you would never attempt to withdraw me from that path. I think, therefore, that I may decidedly say that my present intention [Had his father asked him to state it?] is to give myself as faithfully as I can to the performance of my duties here; ... and to lend any aid I can to those who are ready to unite in building up, on principles agreeable to the word of God, a Church which, under His Blessing, may be the means of doing so much good as the Church of Scotland."[1]

After the completion of his studies in Edinburgh in 1843 William Milligan was licensed and became for a short time assistant to the Rev. Robert Swan of Abercrombie.[2] On the 28th of February 1844 he was presented to the Cameron Parish, Fife, in the presbytery of St. Andrews and was ordained on the 30th of May.[3]

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1. A. Milligan, In Memoriam, William Milligan, D.D. The University Press, Aberdeen, 1894, pp. 10, 11. By way of anticipation we will note that within this letter of a son to his father in the flesh and in the Lord, there is revealed in nuce William Milligan's theology and character: a submission to Christ, a devotion to 'principle' and 'duty', and a willingness to suffer for the sake of his Lord.

2. Ibid. p. 10.

3. H. Scott, Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1925, Vol. V., new ed., p. 187.

> "The year before had witnessed the Disruption of the Church of Scotland. It was a trying time for all earnest minded men, and your father was greatly exercised by the questions that had to be faced and answered by all those who were already in the ministry of the Church of Scotland or were preparing for it."[1]
>
> "From that conviction and aim [to remain and serve in the Church of Scotland] he never swerved, but often in later years have I heard him speak of that period of conflict and anxiety, and of the history yet to be written, of the trials of those who felt it right to remain within the Church, and who for so doing were branded as 'Moderates' and suspected of being cowardly and faint-hearted."[2]

In going to the parish of Cameron, Milligan was returning to the presbytery and synod, of both of which his father was clerk, and in which his father continued to serve as minister to the parish of Elie, not far from Cameron. George Milligan, the father, was to live fourteen more years; and undoubtedly the loving, happy relationship between father and son remained until the last.

George Milligan "was a man of a singularly true and genuine nature, warm-hearted, impulsive and full of affection and kindliness. He possessed great natural abilities, and as a classical scholar had few equals in the Church of Scotland".[my emphasis][3] He published three "Catechisms of Grammar" -- English, Latin and Greek.[4]

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1. In Memoriam, op.cit. p. 10.
2. Ibid. p. 11.
3. Ibid. p. 2.
4. G. Milligan, A Catechism of English Grammar., Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1831; A Catechism of Latin Grammar, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1831; A Catechism of Greek Grammar, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1832. Call numbers at the British Museum: 1212.i.6(4); 722.d.11.(3); 1212.a.18.

Though without doubt William Milligan possessed the native ability, the fact that he had such a father helps to account for his dedication, sense of duty, and scholarship. Latin medallist at the High School of Edinburgh at the age of eleven,[1] and in the advanced Greek class at St. Andrews University, William Milligan had reason to be thankful to his father.

It is only to be expected that the son was aware of his father's view of Scripture -- i.e. the Authorised Version -- and of his theology. We are fortunate to possess a slight glimpse into the former and a brief but enlightening summary of the latter. There is the excerpt from some exercises on the syntax of pronouns:

> "Our Father which art in heaven. According to the modern use of who and which, this expression is incorrect. But at the time when the Bible was translated these words were used indiscriminately; and even yet, in retaining the archaism, we distinguish the language in which we address the Supreme Being from that which we use to our fellow creatures and give it a venerable dignity which would be impaired by the introduction of who. When, therefore, we hear anyone in reading the Lord's Prayer change which into who, we look on it as a piece of affectation, and as detracting from the simplicity of this passage of Scripture. Indeed we prefer which whenever it occurs in the sacred writings."[2]

Here we detect the chief side-effect of a strict education in the "classics", to the virtual exclusion of all other "intruding subjects". Just as "classical" Latin was fixed by the printing press -- even to the use of the ancient Roman script -- and thereby attained "the curious conception of the 'classical' period in a language, the correct or normative period before which all was

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1. W. Steven, The History of the High School of Edinburgh. MacLachlan and Stewart, Edinburgh, 1849. See section on medallists.
2. G. Milligan, A Catechism of English Grammar, op.cit. p. 59.

immature and after which all was decadent",[1] so the printed, Authorised Version, based on the Received Text, became the "classical" paradigm in the same sense. And we may perhaps notice the same tendency in William Milligan's father's theology in relation to the "classical" norm, the Westminster Confession of Faith. We are given a sketch of the father's theology in a funeral sermon. In describing the theology of his deceased friend, he went on to say that he had held to

> "the greatest doctrines of revelation -- the corruption of our nature -- the justification of our persons through the atoning merits of the Saviour -- the necessity of faith in his blood -- and a certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments.
>
> At the same time, however, that he taught that 'the wages of sin is death', but that 'the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord', he was no less zealous in inculcating the necessity of good works. On all occasions he was careful to maintain the great doctrine of Scripture, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. To all those views which teach that Christ has done everything for us, and that it is, therefore, unnecessary to do anything for ourselves -- and that, if we only believe, nothing more is required, he gave decided opposition. ... [my emphasis]. He therefore resisted them with all his might. Fully convinced that there is no other name given under heaven among men, whereby we may be saved, but the name of Jesus, he uniformly affirmed that our faith in him must manifest itself by the fruits of holiness; that through the sanctification of our nature we must enter into the kingdom, and that eternal life shall be the portion of those only who, by a patient continuance in well-doing, seek for immortal glory and honour. Need we add that this is the doctrine of scripture and that alone which can bring glory to God or salvation to man? ... From the time of my settlement in this quarter, we lived together in the most intimate terms. Seldom or never did our opinions differ on any subject." [my emphasis].[2]

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1. M. McLuhan, The Gutenberg Galaxy, the Making of Typographic Man, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1962, p. 229 -- a quotation from C.S. Lewis, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Oxford, 1954, p. 21.

2. G. Milligan, Sermon on the occasion of the death of the Rev. Andrew G. Carstairs, D.D., preached at Anstruther -- Wester on Sabbath, 21st October, 1838, Edinburgh, 1839, pp. 21, 22, 25.

Is not the above quotation a fair summary of the theology of the Church of Scotland at the time when it voted, on the motion of George Cook, to depose John McLeod Campbell from its communion? And is it not the theology of those who were committed to the "logicausal", federal, Calvinistic doctrinal overlay of the Westminster Confession of Faith, with its covenant of works and double predestination and limited atonement? If Christ died only for some, then only those can be saved. One way of being assured that you are one of the elect is by making certain that you are engaged in good works and by keeping the Sabbath. This is probably a caricature, but it does indicate the milieu, common to almost all Christian environments of that day, in which William Milligan was reared, which was not seriously contradicted by his schooling, or by his two theological essays. The basis of the total structure was natural theology, and it would begin to give ground only gradually as Milligan pursued his historical studies of the documents and the Object of Christianity.

B. Germany

There was another book that William Milligan's father published -- an edition of Corderius' Colloquies for the use of Latin students. The first quotation might throw a light on William's early prowess in learning Latin; and the second might stand as a prophecy that he himself would fulfil:

> "Patrem non audemus nisi Latine alloqui.
> We dare not speak to our father in anything but Latin."[1]

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1. G. Milligan, Corderii Colloquiorum centuria selecta ... recensita ... nec non vocabularis instructa, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1831, p.58.

"Coll. XCVII

A. I hear that your Brother is returned already from Germany.
B. So it is.
A. Why went your Brother?
B. He was sent by my Father, that he might learn to speak German."[1]

Now we do not know that his father sent him, but we do know that William Milligan did spend a good part of a year in Germany.

> "In 1845 his health gave cause for anxiety, and it was thought desirable to apply to the Presbytery for a year's leave of absence to see what change would do. Accompanied by his brother, Peter, who was also in the ministry of the Church of Scotland, he went abroad to Germany, and the two brothers studied together at the University of Halle. Your father here laid the foundation of that thorough knowledge of German which proved of such value to him in his later theological studies."[2]

If it was a change William Milligan needed, Germany was probably just what the good Dr. Welsh had prescribed. We recall that the various readings had forced the honest students of Scripture to learn something about historical criticism. We know that Thomas Chalmers had encouraged its study, especially on the part of those best equipped for it. Though wary of what the neologists were doing in Germany, he realised that much scientific work was being done there. He very likely learned most about this work from his colleague David Welsh, who laid an even greater stress on the importance of studying historical documents and had himself travelled and studied in Germany.

As we may recall, Tholuck and Neander were the professors most

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1. Ibid. Colloquy XCVII.
2. M. Milligan, In Memoriam, William Milligan, D.D., The University Press, Aberdeen, 1894, p. 12.

sought out by the students from Scotland; this might have been expected, for these men represented the evangelicals, who, without being less scientific -- indeed they would have claimed to be more so -- than the neologists, carried on a polemic with the rationalistic ranks of German scholarship.

We know that Thomas Chalmers had heard "from Erskine of Linlathen about Tholuck",[1] and probably from Welsh, too.

> "It fell singularly in with the current of Dr. Chalmers' thoughts, that, when engaged in a study of the German philosophy, Professor [August] Tholuck of Halle, visited Edinburgh. He took an opportunity of spending an evening with him, at the house of a friend with whom he resided. 'Dr. Chalmers', says the friend, 'seated himself on a low chair close to the learned German, and listened with an air of genuine docility to all he said, throwing in a stray characteristic observation now and then, always, however, in the way of encouragement, never in the way of contradiction... The result of this interview was an amount of mutual confidence and esteem, as deep and sincere as it was sudden. Tholuck took an early opportunity of returning the visit, and spent some hours with Dr. Chalmers, urging upon him in the most direct and homely way, the necessity of directing his mind to the study of German theology, for, as it was from that quarter the bane had come which was poisoning the simple faith, so it was there alone that the antidote could be found."[2]

1. Halle and F.A. Tholuck

It could be that William Milligan, through Chalmers or Welsh, met Professor Tholuck, who encouraged him to come and study in Halle. In any event to Halle he went that very year, and -- it may have been -- not just for his health. Indeed, it could even prove to be unhealthy:

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1. A.L. Drummond, The Kirk and the Continent, St. Andrews Press, Edinburgh, p. 235.
2. W. Hanna, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Chalmers, Thomas Constable and Co., Edinburgh, 1852, Vol. IV, pp. 433, 434.

> "In the United States and in Scotland the mere study of German Theology was enough to gain the reputation of being unsound."[1]

The University of Halle was founded in 1694 through the influence of Spener, a well-known pietist.

> "Spener laid down the principle, that the works and benefits of Christ are of more importance than accurate definitions concerning his person."[2]

In Reaction to the study of and debate concerning Symbolics to the exclusion of the study of the Bible, Spener launched an era of earnest investigation of the Scriptures with a double stress on the need of an evangelical experience and on the necessity of a "scientific" systemisation of Biblical heart-truths.[3] The movement from symbolics to the heart opened the way for the unfettered use of the reason; and a rationalism detached from Church doctrine came to the fore at Halle. There follows a description of the rationalist movement, written in 1835:

> "the tone of piety began to give way with Baumgarten; and at length the foundations of faith in a divine revelation were undermined by Semler...while rationalism, through the exertions of Wegsheider, the countenance of Gesenius, and the indifference of Niemeyer, had obtained firm footing, and seduced the understandings of the great body of students."[4]

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1. A.L. Drummond, German Protestantism Since Luther, Epworth Press, London, 1951, p. 139.
2. For an excellent Christological perspective of this whole period extending from the scholastic age of protestantism up through the nineteenth century see J.A. Dorner, History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ, translated by D.W. Simon, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1870, 1878, Vol. II, pp.363-382; and the whole of Vol. III. This quotation is from Vol. II, pp. 363, 364.
3. See for a more extensive account of the pietist movement in relation to the founding of the University of Halle: G.C. Knapp, Lectures on Christian Theology, translated by Leonard Woods, (see especially the translator's preface), Thomas Ward and Co., London, reprinted from the American Edition of 1831.
4. E. Robinson, A Concise View of the Universities and of the State of Theological Education in Germany, Thomas Clark, Edinburgh, 1835, p.36.

a. The Champion of the Evangelicals

It was Tholuck (1799-1877) who in 1825 was called upon to combat the rationalists and uphold the evangelical cause in Halle University. Received at first with suspicion and open hostility, he wore down the opposition and was instrumental in leading many young men to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Tholuck was the drawing power at Halle; and Milligan almost certainly attended some of his courses. This is not to say, however, that Milligan did not study under any of the other members of the large faculty there.[1]

Next to Tholuck the chief attraction at Halle was Professor Julius Müller, who had been influenced by Tholuck and was his intimate friend. He was, however, a disciple of Neander, whom we shall consider later. He is best known for his great work, On the Christian Doctrine of Sin, which Milligan was to commend to his Scottish brethren. Also Müller's polemic against the criticism of Baur might have left its mark, for we find that a significant portion of Milligan's early articles are written as over against the Tübingen school.

In Old Testament exegesis there was H. Hupfeld,

> "the successor of Gesenius, and not inferior to him in Hebrew and oriental learning, while far excelling him in a sound theological and Christian spirit."[2]

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1. See Appendix, Note VI, for a list of the faculty of the University of Halle in 1845, the year of Milligan's residence there.

2. P. Schaff, Germany: its Universities, Theology and Religion, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1857, p. 346.

It is impossible to learn for a certainty under which professors at Halle Milligan studied, for students from outside Germany were allowed great freedom of movement and choice without being required to "sign up". However, in addition to the time and effort spent on learning German, it is very likely that Milligan gave most of his attention to the teaching of Professor August Tholuck -- not, of course, that the two aims would have been mutually exclusive.

Tholuck's influence was felt not only in the classroom but outside it, in his home, in conversation and from the pulpit, from which he preached to the students every other Sunday. His impact upon the students is described:

> "One of the most striking and lovely traits of his character is this warm attachment to students. He loves them like a father. He cannot live without them. He not only invites them freely to his house and table, but is almost invariably surrounded by two or three of them on his promenades which he is obliged to take for the benefit of his health, twice a day... His free conversations in his peripatetic style are often more interesting and stirring than his lectures. I know no teacher who can deal better with active young minds. He makes liberal allowance for their difference of constitution and temper, and likes a collision of opinions, if they proceed alike from an honest search after truth. His object is not to make disciples and convert them to a particular system -- for he himself can hardly be said to have a system -- but to rouse their slumbering faculties and to put them on the track of independent research ...
>
> Tholuck is a personal favourite also with students and scholars from foreign countries, especially from England, Scotland and the United States. By his perfect mastery over the modern languages of Europe, the natural quickness and versatility of his mind, his extensive personal acquaintances, and his frequent vacation trips to England, Switzerland and France, he is admirably qualified to introduce strangers to a correct knowledge and appreciation of the state of science and religion in Germany."[1]

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1. Ibid. pp. 287, 288.

Perhaps it was just this coming into contact with such a lively, dedicated and learned Christian outside the confines of his homeland that most impressed Milligan during his residence at Halle. The mere fact that such a perceptive young student was living almost completely outside the former context of his life and studies would have constrained him to become aware of a different theological point of view.

What, we might ask, was altered in Milligan's theology by his stay in Halle? This is not easy to determine. But one thing is certain: he maintained firmly his respect towards the objective -- the evidence. The method of drawing a conclusion only after a thorough examination of the particulars of evidence was to remain with Milligan the rest of his life. He was to come to believe that there is a limit beyond which mere evidence cannot lead the observer, apart from the spiritual perspective. But this did not mean for him that evidence was to be ignored -- only that there was to be a seeing through the evidence to the theological object. No, if there was one methodological invariant in Milligan's procedure, it was respect for the evidence.

In addition to this, it can be said -- as we shall learn in the next chapter -- that though he might have increased his knowledge of textual criticism by the study of the works of men like Griesbach and Lachmann, Milligan had to wait until his return to Scotland and his study of Tregelles before he came to be assured of the correct principles governing that science.

What Milligan confronted during his stay in Germany was simply a

different philosophy and a different theology -- different, that is, from what he had been taught. Tholuck must have been instrumental in introducing him to that difference.

b. Tholuck's Theology

Though it may be said that Tholuck had no system as such, for he wrote no systematic theology, nevertheless he did hold certain presuppositions that probably remained fairly constant. These presuppositions appear most clearly in the appendices that Tholuck later added to his first -- and very popular -- effort to combat rationalism, Guido and Julius; or the True Consecration of the Doubter.[1]

The two most important appendices are entitled:

I

"Worth of the various kinds of evidence by which the truth of Christianity may be established; or the mutual relation of Apologetics, Dogmatics, and inward Christian experience."

V

"The relation of reason to revelation."[2]

In these appendices there is the teaching that the right order of procedure is:

(a) Doctrinal theology in its doctrine of the corruption of man.

(b) The doctrine of corruption arouses in man the consciousness of selfishness as the predominant feeling of the self; and this produces the consciousness of the need of holiness.

(c) In seeking for holiness, man looks for a truly holy Being.

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1. F.A.D. Tholuck, Guido and Julius; or, The True Consecration of the Doubter, trans. by J. Martin for the 7th ed., John F. Shaw, London, 1855.

2. Ibid. pp. 133, 135.

(d) In this search he finds One who is both Redeemer and Sanctifier, through the work of God in him in regeneration, which experience enables him to know that the Redeemer he seeks exists.

> "Thus his convictions are founded upon an immovable basis -- the facts of his own inner life."[1]

At this point, according to Tholuck, we can see the life and doctrine of Christ and his apostles in a new light; and all the other doctrines become meaningful and satisfy the needs of human nature.

Only now does apologetics become significant, for the external evidence can show how the Spirit, who has been evident in the self, worked outside the self in history in an extraordinary way.

The study of such an apologetic order certainly would have caused Milligan to think again about his own, for it made a virtue out of what the Common Sense apologists, and Chalmers too, had had to call in as an answer to Hume. We will recall that, wishing to preserve natural theology, the Scottish apologists had turned Bacon's method, to which they were committed, in upon the self to discover the principles that could turn an argument of probability into a logical demonstration. After "discovering" the principle of causality on which to base their argument, they had finally to resort to the conscience for the assurance that the power behind the evidential events is good. Thus the basic formal principle of causality which purportedly causes man to see every phenomenon as evidence of a temporally prior cause -- i.e., in this context, as mediate evidence for God and truth -- this supposedly basic principle

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1. Ibid. p. 137.

had itself to be founded on the immediacy of the inner experience of the distinction between right and wrong in the heart. That Tholuck had detected this is indicated by the following:

> "But where there is an indisposition to admit anything immediate in the action of the reason, another faculty is often introduced by the side of reason, viz., conscience."[1]

And at the basis of the conscience as a moral principle is the consciousness of God in the soul. This was the "immovable basis" for Tholuck and very probably could have been the contact for Milligan between his apologetics and the theology taught by Tholuck and later by Neander.

An excerpt from the fifth appendix gives us Tholuck's philosophical and theological ancestry -- with an old friend included:

> "The influence of Plato may be traced in the Christian theology, nor does he seem to have brought into it a foreign element, but something really akin. [my emphasis] It is apparent in the Alexandrian school, and also in Augustine ... From Augustine it passed into the Middle Ages, and is especially observable in the contemplative scholastics, for example in Hugo of St. Victoire. As a link between the old and new, we quote the words of Bacon, 'truth in being and truth in thought are the same, there is no more difference between them than between the same ray when direct and reflected'. It would be wrong [indeed it would] to pass over the writer of the 'Discourses on Religion' [Schleiermacher] who opposed with all his might the miserable notion that the expressions of the spirit are not immediate."[2]

For Tholuck the fundamental presupposition was:

> "the ground of truth for man is the life of God within him, and by this we pass beyond the merely subjective thought and dream to actual knowledge and possession. We hear not merely ourselves but God."[3]

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1. Ibid. p. 160.
2. Ibid. p. 158.
3. Ibid. p. 161.

Tholuck invoked the New Testament for confirmation of this presupposition:

> "It is a fundamental principle of the New Testament, that whatever may be the moral corruption of man, yet in his inmost nature he is related to God, and by this life in his spirit is susceptible of truth, holiness, and blessedness."[1]

Tholuck called Paul's words at Athens and his epistle to the Romans as witnesses, but especially did he call upon the Gospel according to John.

To know anything one must have the spirit of that thing. To know God we must have his spirit. Christ, by exciting a consciousness of guilt and the feeling of the need of redemption, makes us want the gospel to be true. Being then inclined towards the reception of the truth we can receive it from Christ. Only then, when the truth has been received into the inner life, may the spirit go about investigating its harmony with reason and the necessity for revelation.

> "But the effort will only lead to truth and life, when the spirit of Christ is one with the spirit of the seeker. The same may be said of the rationality of divine revelation as founded upon historical events."[2]

Tholuck also called in the early fathers:

> "The leading idea of the early fathers is the Platonic notion, that the divine within a man is merely the eye for the divine without -- that reason is only the ability to perceive it. Hence, Origen ascribes everything truly divine, that existed before Christ, to the presence of the Logos in the mind. And Justin Martyr says, that by nature and research no one could find out the great things of God; but holy men presented themselves to the working of the Spirit of God, that the divine power, touching their spirits, might use them as a harp or lyre, and reveal to us things heavenly and divine'. So John of

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1. Ibid. p. 163.
2. Ibid. p. 167.

> Damascus, 'As we do not live with naked soul, but as the soul covered with a veil of flesh possesses the mind, which like an eye sees and knows, and is susceptible of the knowledge of real existence; and since it has not its knowledge at home, but needs a teacher; let us come in sincerity to the true instructor."[1]

Tholuck adapted Schleiermacher's theology to a more evangelical use. By the correlation of the consciousness of man with the historical image of the archetypal man, i.e., Jesus Christ, a man's consciousness or spirit is potentiated by the absolutely vigorous consciousness of God in Christ. Herein the racial development of man receives its fulfilment. Man's νοῦς which always needed the πνεῦμα for its powerful, final development, was brought to fruition by the πνεῦμα of the Redeemer through the historical image. The presupposed facts of this theology are the historical experiences of the individual and the Church, the only causal explanation of which must have been the archetypal person of the Redeemer in his sinless and perfectly active God-consciousness. Thus might Milligan have been confronted with another causality, for the "effect" here was the experience of redemption from sin, involving a potentiation of one's God-consciousness, through a deeper self-consciousness not to be accounted for by man's own efforts but only by the universal grace of God in the Redeemer. The mediating agency is the preaching of the word of grace, but the efficient cause is the recalled image of Christ. The Bible doctrine is preached, and the dogma of the Church develops along with the growing experience of redemption within the community of believers. The external

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1. Ibid. p. 168.

evidence is then no longer looked upon as a means of proof but only as confirmation and enrichment. Scripture, within the context of the experience of the living community, is read in its harmonious significance. Such, in part at least, was Schleiermacher's contribution, which Tholuck could have conveyed to Milligan; and we can see how he would have been impressed with such an entirely different approach: its use of evidence, its organic, "spiritual" quality, and its adaptation to the "modern man".

Tholuck's theology was more orthodox than Schleiermacher's, however. Schleiermacher had replaced the doctrine of the divine and human natures of Christ by the ideas that the Redeemer is archetypal and historical; he did not believe that the doctrine of the Trinity was needed. Tholuck, on the other hand, viewed the Redeemer as the archetype that had come into existence from the world of the intelligibles contained in the eternal Logos of God. As he interpreted John's prologue, the Word of God is the objectified spirit of God, God's own thought of Himself. The Logos, the only adequate thought of God's being, must therefore be equal to God in all things, God's absolute counterpart, distinguished from God and yet referring to Him. It is God's love that finds Himself in his Word. Within the Word lies the κόσμος νοητός and to this extent the intelligible world is the counterpart of God. Though God knows his objective counterpart in the Logos, and so far in the archetypal world, this intelligible world had no counterpart in which to see itself; but because of God's love for the Logos and for the κόσμος νοητός within the Logos, He, through the

Logos, created the κόσμος αἰσθητός in order that the intelligible world might have its own counterpart in existence, in its limited being. This latter, perceptible world mirrors the pattern of the archetypal world; thus God's eternal power and Godhead are reflected in his works of creation. These temporal beings are the archetypal thoughts of God which have come into existence. The depth of God's love is shown in his sending the perfect, eternal archetype of humanity into existence, to redeem a fallen race and, by its exaltation in Christ, to share with it more than it would have received by mere restoration to an unfallen condition -- even the glory of the eternal God.[1]

Schleiermacher and Tholuck both held to a basically Platonic scheme of the intelligible, real world and the sensible, existent world. Schleiermacher's starting point was experience or feeling of dependence, and from this subjectivity he reasoned to a unitary, absolute, non-objective, immediate First Cause. Tholuck followed Schleiermacher in starting with feeling, but he accepted the doctrinal ground of the eternal trinity, while attempting to maintain the Platonic schema.

The other main point in which Tholuck significantly -- for this thesis -- differed from Schleiermacher was in his view of the importance of the resurrection. Schleiermacher's view is given as follows:

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1. See especially A. Tholuck, Commentary on the Gospel of St. John trans. by C. Krauth, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1860. The Dogma contained in the Doctrine of the Logos, pp. 67-70. See also Appendix, Note VII.

> " 120. The facts of the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, and the prediction of His coming again for Judgment, do not stand in any direct and close connexion with the proper doctrine of His Person.
> 99. ... cannot be taken as properly constituent parts of the doctrine of His Person."[1]

Tholuck, on the other hand believed that the resurrection is central:

> "The resurrection of our Lord is not less a postulate of history than of doctrinal theology. Without it, the Christian Church is inconceivable. The greater the importance of the fact, the clearer the testimony of history for it, the more have the enemies of Christianity been tempted to make their assault upon it, and the more unsuccessful have their assault upon it, and the more unsuccessful have their assaults been."[2]

For Schleiermacher the archetypal image of the historical Redeemer served as the empowering correlate for the consciousness of the Christian, but this image did not include within its operative scope the impression made upon the disciples during "the Forty Days". It was an image handed down in church tradition but existentially and pneumatically cut off from the risen, ascended Lord.

With Tholuck the archetypal image of Christ included the "Forty Day" impressions and was maintained as present and powerful by Christ's exaltation and continuing contemporaneity.

2. John August William Neander

Let us now turn to the professor who very likely made the strongest impression on Milligan during his residence in Germany -- John Augustus William Neander. Tholuck himself had been influenced

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1. F. Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, a translation of the leading paragraphs of the 1821-22 and 1830-31 editions by D.M. Baillie, W.F. Henderson, Edinburgh, 1922, pp. 38, 39.
2. A. Tholuck, Commentary on the Gospel of St. John, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1860, p. 404.

by Neander. In 1818, when Neander was thirty-one years of age and Tholuck nineteen, the two met for theological discussion an evening each week.[1] That Milligan could have spent some time in Berlin is indicated by the following:

> "after a distinguished divinity course he went abroad and studied for about a year at one or more of the German Universities."[2]

In any event he "made the acquaintance, among others, of Neander, in whom he found a kindred spirit".[3]

a. "A Fellow Spirit"

Neander (1787-1850) was born David Mendel, of Jewish parents. He studied Plato as well as the Law of Moses. He was drawn by the Romantic School as over against Rationalism. He studied under Schleiermacher. Three friends, whose Christian names were John, Augustus, and William, were instrumental in leading him to be baptised; he took their names and became a new man, Neander.

Neander is called the father of modern church history. His personal piety and deep learning were dedicated to the service of Christ. Significantly, he chose for his motto: "Pectus est quod theologum facit".

It was the spirituality of Neander and his absolute dedication

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1. F.H. Mitchell, The Hermeneutics of F. August Tholuck, A Study in the Methods of Biblical Interpretation, Thesis presented for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Edinburgh, in the Faculty of Divinity, 1962, p. 3.
2. W. Moulton, The Expository Times, Vol. 5, Oct. 1893-Sept. 1894, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, p. 247.
3. S. Lee, Dictionary of National Biography, Supplement Vol. III, Smith, Elder and Co., London, 1901.

to Christian scholarship that most impressed his students. Ungainly and even shabby in outward appearance he was magnetic in his simple, humble and loving personality. He went out of his way, and often at great sacrifice, to befriend, encourage, and support many of the impoverished students who flocked to hear him.

> "He pursued theology not merely as an exercise of the understanding, but always as a sacred business of the heart... The living centre and heart's blood of the science was for him faith in Jesus Christ, as the highest revelation of a holy and merciful God, as the fountain of all salvation and sanctifying grace for a ruined world. Whatever he found that was really great, noble, good and true in history, he referred directly or indirectly to the fact of the incarnation, in which he humbly adored the central sun of all history and the inmost sanctuary of the moral universe."[1]

Neander's orthodoxy may not have been up to the strict standard of the Westminster Confession of Faith, but his Christianity, from all reports, was unfeigned and deep-rooted. In this context we read that:

> "Neander, a convert from Judaism, questioned [John Stuart] Blackie about Scottish religious observances: were these stringent traditions of 'Sabbath observance' not Jewish notions? It was startling to be informed that the distinctive trait of Scottish religion was 'not Christian'."[2]

> Neander's "great fort [sic] lies in thorough mastery, independent investigation, and scrupulously conscientious use of the sources; and above all, in the extraordinary talent of bringing out, in a genetic way, the hidden life of Christianity and representing it as a leaven-like power that pervades and sanctifies the lump of society from within. He restored the religious and practical element to its due prominence, in opposition to the coldly intellectual and critical method of rationalistic historians who immediately preceded him; yet without thereby wronging in the least the claims of science. He everywhere follows the footsteps of the Saviour in his march through the various ages of the Church, and kisses them

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1. P. Schaff, Germany: its Universities, Theology and Religion, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1857, pp. 273, 274.

2. A.L. Drummond, The Kirk and the Continent, St. Andrews Press, Edinburgh, 1956, p. 234.

> reverently wherever he finds them. He traces them in the writings of an Origen and a Tertullian, a Chrysostom and an Augustin, a Bernard and a Thomas Aquinas, a Luther and a Melanchton, a Calvin and a Fenelon. Christ was to him the divine harmony of all the discords of churches and sects, or as he liked to repeat after Pascal; 'En Jesus Christ toutes les contradictions sont accordées'."[1]

Neander helped to supply a portion of what was lacking in Milligan's theological education. What he contributed was put well by Milligan's former professor of Church History, David Welsh, in a review of one of Neander's books:

> "It is a work expressly intended to aid the diligent, well instructed, earnest student of Christianity, and of the word of God [such, undoubtedly, was William Milligan], in entering into the very spirit of the Christian life and doctrine. To such persons the excellent Neander has ever been a friend. To their benefit he may be truly said to have devoted his distinguished abilities, his precious time, and his warmest affections... He is a... serious, warm-hearted, practical believer in Christ Jesus and the Christian revelation, who in the spirit of a living faith communicates the deep results of study and reflection, as a material for study and reflection to men of kindred mind."[2]

It is pertinent to note the titles of the courses taught by Neander during the winter session of 1844-45 in the "Frederick William" University at Berlin: Gospel of Saint John, History of Christian Dogma, Principles of Christian Morality, Principles of Theological Morality, Theological "Conservatorium".[3]

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1. P. Schaff, Germany; its Universities, Theology and Religion, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1857, p. 276.
2. D. Welsh, review of History of the Planting and Training of the Christian Church by the Apostles, by A. Neander, in The Eclectic Review, 1842, July-December, Thomas Ward & Co., London, p. 378.
3. W. Perry, German University Education, Longman, Brown, Green and Longman, London, 1845, pp. 167, 168.

b. Pectoral Theology and the Risen God-man

Let us now look to the theology of Neander to discern wherein Milligan was his "kindred spirit".

> "Neander takes his place at the side of Schleiermacher, not only as his friend and colleague, but as the most eminent of his disciples."[1]

Before knowing Schleiermacher personally, Neander had been influenced by his Discourses and his translation of Plato.

> "It was owing to Schleiermacher that he [Neander] occupied himself with the psychological analysis of the religious sentiment, and that he studied its origin, its developments, the diverse phases that it passes through, and the manifold terms that it puts on. Further, it was Schleiermacher who made him understand the importance of Christian fellowship in community, its particular nature, and its part in history. And, finally, it was to Schleiermacher that Neander owed the organic method which he has been able to apply with so much felicity to the exposition of the history of the Church."[2]

Neander was frank in stating his own presuppositions. He believed that it is a mistake to think that one can approach any subject without presuppositions. Every one takes something for granted; and one's presuppositions are either right or wrong. The correct ones are those that are laid down in human nature by the Creator; they are laws of human nature. Presuppositions other than the God-given ones are prepossessions and prejudices, and the one who holds them is in error. He who claims that he is able to start from a basis without any presuppositions is also in error and in rebellion against the Creator.

It is the very purpose of science to enable men to distinguish

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1. F. Lichtenberger, History of German Theology in the Nineteenth Century, trans. ed. by W. Hastie, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1889, p. 167.
2. Ibid. pp. 169, 170.

between the God-given presuppositions and the prepossessions and prejudices that are man-made. There is an inward necessity in God's moral laws which constrains us to recognise them while all other postulates are purely voluntary.

What are these primary laws? There is the intuitive consciousness of God. Herein we recognise Schleiermacher's influence and, behind him, Plato's. The primary datum is "the intuitive consciousness of God" or, more strictly, the immediate awareness of one's own consciousness of God. The created spirit cannot deny its dependence upon God, the only Creative Spirit; this is an immediate apprehension. This same God is then to be apprehended in creation -- that is, in nature -- and in history. The light of heaven is conveyed to our minds by the laws of the Creator. The only part the intellect has to play in relation to these laws is to demonstrate their necessity and to show that any prepossessions held in rebellion against them are contradictions. Here we have a religion-in-general.

In addition to the laws of religion-in-general there is the law or presupposition basic to any approach to the contemplation of Christ and the Scriptures. That presupposition is the truth that Christ is God-man. On this presupposition "hangs the very being of the Christian as such; the existence of the Christian Church, and the nature of the Christian consciousness."[1]

In regard to the phrase, "the Christian consciousness", Neander

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1. A. Neander, The Life of Jesus Christ in its Historical Connexion and Historical Development, trans, by J. McClintock and C. Blumenthal, Geo. Bell and Sons, London, 1888, p. 2. This book, as well as many others at the time, was written in answer to Strauss's Life of Jesus.

added a very informative note:

> "It was one of the epoch-making indications of Schleiermacher's influence upon theology that he succeeded in stamping this phrase [Christian consciousness] as current, with the meaning that he assigned to it in an age which ... was guided only by the naked understanding, and destitute at once of faith and of true historical insight. He used it to denote Christianity as an undeniable, self-revealing power, entering into the life of humanity; an immediate internal power in the spiritual world, from which went forth, and is ever going forth, the regeneration of the life of man, and which produced phenomena which can be explained in no other way. This phrase, and the thought which it expresses, are able to maintain their ground against that formalism of thought which is so hostile to everything immediate, and wishes to substitute empty abstractions for the living powers that move the human race, as well as against that low and mean view of the world ... which owns no power above those which build railways and set steam-engines a-going. As the intuitive consciousness of God indicates to the human mind the existence, the omnipresent power, and the self-revelation of a personal Deity, so does this 'Christian consciousness' testify that Christ lived, and that he continued by his Spirit, to operate upon mankind. The works of creation only reveal God to him who already has a consciousness of the Divine existence; for he who has not God within can find him nowhere. So it is only he who has a 'Christian consciousness' that can recognise CHRIST in the fragrance of tradition and the manifestations of history, or that can comprehend the history of CHRIST and his Church."[1]

That both Tholuck and Neander followed Schleiermacher in the idea of the reciprocal relationship between man's consciousness and the historical appearance of Christ is shown by Tholuck's quotation from Neander:

> "We fully subscribe to what has been said by Neander in his Pflanz. 3d ed. ii. p. 696, (Planting and training, i. 505;) 'Certainly it could be nothing merely accidental which induced men so differently constituted and trained as Paul and John, to connect such an idea (the Logos) with the doctrine of the person of Christ, but the result of a higher necessity, which is founded in the nature of Christianity, in the power of the impression which the life of Christ had made on the minds of men, in the reciprocal relation between

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1. Ibid. pp. 2, 3.

> the appearance of Christ, and the archetype that presents itself as an inward revelation of God, in the depths of the higher self-consciousness. And all this has found its point of connection and its verification in the manner in which Christ, the unerring witness, expressed his consciousness of the indwelling of the divine essence in him'." [Tholuck's emphasis][1]

But in what sense is Jesus Christ the God-man, the Son of God? He is such, according to Neander,

> "in a sense which can not be predicated by any human being -- the perfect image of the personal God in the form of that humanity that was estranged from him; that in him the source of the Divine life itself in humanity appeared; that by him the idea of humanity was realised."[2]

Lest we should be tempted to think that we are not centring in on what must have exerted a great influence on Milligan, let us at this point anticipate a bit by quoting a sentence from the most popular book he wrote, The Resurrection of our Lord:

> "He is the Archetype in which the idea of the Divine mind is realised."[3]

Neander, in trying to mediate between the supernaturalists and the naturalists, attempted to explain history by the light of the religious consciousness, and the religious consciousness by the light of history:

> "This presupposed truth [Christ as God-man] and the Historical Accounts mutually confirm and illustrate each other."[4]

This is illustrated by the correlation between consciousness

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1. A. Tholuck, Commentary on the Gospel of St. John, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1860, p. 66.
2. Neander, The Life of Jesus Christ in its Historical Connexion and Historical Development, p. 3.
3. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of our Lord, Macmillan & Co., London, 4th ed. reprinted, 1905, p. 133.
4. Neander, op.cit. p. 3.

and history especially in the relation between the Christian consciousness and the image of Christ.

Consciousness is man's higher nature. God-consciousness, or pious self-awareness, the higher aspect of consciousness, is heightened and potentiated by the Christian consciousness, which is its necessary destiny and inseparable from it. That there is an essential, necessary relationship between man's Christian consciousness and his consciousness per se is shown by the basic harmony between them. Thus man's Christian consciousness is seen to be consonant with the universal and essential presuppositions or laws of human nature.

Apologetics is the proper department in which this connection is demonstrated. In the first place, the Christian consciousness satisfied a basic need of human nature, a need created by history and pointing to its own fulfilment. In the second place, this Christian consciousness arose from the direct, immediate impression which Christ's appearance made upon the eye-witnesses, and, through them, upon all mankind. This image of Christ has always had the power of self-propagation in the common consciousness of the Christian Church; Christ himself, in his appearance among men, was the originator of this impression or image, and it is to him that the image continually refers. This image of Christ could never have entered the Christian consciousness apart from Christ himself. Just as man's finite mind, apart from revelation, never could have arrived at the idea of God, so the actual life of Christ must be the explanation of the existence and power of the image of Christ in the

Christian consciousness. It is Christ's revelation of himself, through the testimony of the Spirit in the human consciousness, that gives wholeness to and inspires the documents of history concerning Him.

The stream of Divine Life that flows in and through the Church is grounded in a consciousness of absolute dependence on Christ. And this absolute dependence is identical with a constant renewing of the consciousness after the image of Christ. Such a power of renewal and redemption can have its seat only in one who had within himself the authority of an infallible consciousness.

Now this life of Christ does not make sense apart from the presupposition of his being the God-man. The way that Christ comes to us in our consciousness is given greater definiteness and perspicuity as we contemplate the life of Christ through Holy Scriptures and other relevant documents of history. The essence of the Christian consciousness is found in the impress which Christ himself made upon the souls of the Apostles; and as we ourselves look for and listen to Christ through the historical documents, our Christian consciousness more nearly approximates the original and pure impression received by the Apostles. Therefore "we must yield ourselves up to the Spirit of Christ, whom we acknowledge and adore as exalted above us, that He himself may show us his Divine image in the mirror of his Life, and teach us how to distinguish all prejudices of our own creating from the necessary laws of our being."[1]

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1. Neander, The Life of Christ, p. 6.

Let us look closer at Neander's interpretation of Scripture, especially at the way in which he, along with Tholuck, differed from Schleiermacher. Once again we consider the resurrection and ascension, two of the most important momenta in the developed theology of Milligan.

We will recall that for Schleiermacher these two facts cannot be taken as properly constituent parts of the doctrine of Christ's Person. Schleiermacher could even speculate, from the pulpit, that Christ's resurrection might have been a reviving from a coma. Not so for Neander.

The reappearance of Christ from the dead is necessary to explain the change in the Apostles from dejection to joy and activity, and his reappearance was not a vision, for there is no psychological justification of a vision. The letters of the Apostle Paul, as well as the gospel narratives, all bear the stamp of sensible reality, of undeniable historical reality. Christ's death was real, and the manifestation of the risen Saviour was intended only for believers (a theme to which Milligan recurred again and again), to seal and confirm their faith,

> "to form the point of transition from their sensible communion with the visible Christ to their spiritual fellowship with the invisible, but ever present Saviour."[1]

The viewpoint of the following passage is so faithfully followed by Milligan in his writings on the resurrection of our Lord that he could not have been uninfluenced by its teaching:

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1. Ibid. p. 457.

> "Although obscurity rests, to a great extent, upon the nature of the existence of Christ on earth after his resurrection, and upon the nature of the corporeal organism with which he rose from the dead; still, this much is certain, that the fundamental conception, on which all the representations of the New Testament are founded, exhibits the resurrection only as the means of transition from the form of his earthly being, whose close was his death, to a higher form of personal existence superior to death; as the beginning of a new life which was not to be, as the former, subject to the laws of a corporeal, earthly organism, but was destined for an imperishable development. When Paul declared (Rom. vi. 9,10) that Christ, risen from the dead, should die no more, because death had not dominion over him; when he opposed this resurrection (2 Cor. xiii, 4) as a commencement of a life in Divine power, to his earlier life in human weakness through which he was made subject to death, he only gave utterance to a conviction that was common to all the eye-witnesses of the resurrection. The mode of Christ's reappearance had made the same impression on them all. And the resurrection had necessarily to be considered as the restoration from death, in a higher form, of his personal existence (consisting of a union of body and soul, not subject thereafter to death, but destined for an unbroken eternity of life), in order to become the foundation of belief in an eternal life of the [nota bene] glorified human personality, to spring out of death; in order to be the fact on which this faith (as a historically-grounded belief) could be established."[1]

The ascension of Christ was in itself supernatural, as was only fitting for the removal of Christ, no longer subject to death, from the earthly scene. Thus the end of Christ's life on earth corresponded to its beginning, both having been miraculous.

The Hegelian, David Strauss, with all of his negative theology, at least provoked much re-thinking on the part of the theological world. Neander himself must have been driven back to his Hebrew Gestalt in his countering insistence on the objective, historical grounding of Revelation as against any mere subjective, pious self-awareness:

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1. Ibid. pp. 485, 486.

> "If it be said now that 'it does not follow, because the Apostles conceived the matter so, that it really was so; and that we must distinguish the fundamental fact from their subjective conceptions', we have the reply ready. Their subjective conception was founded in a fact which it presupposed, viz. the way in which Christ showed himself to them after his resurrection; in the impression which he made upon them by his higher and celestial appearance. And further, apart from this necessary presupposition, if Christ led the Apostles to form such a subjective conception merely by mysteriously appearing and vanishing, by keeping silence as to his abode and as to the end towards which he advanced, he must have planned fraud, to form the basis of their religious conviction from that time on. As surely as we cannot attribute such a fraud to the Holy One, who called himself the 'Truth', so certainly must we take for granted an objective fact as the source of the faith of the Apostles."[1]

It was this recognition of the objective, factual basis of the Gospel, interpreted by the Spirit, that enabled Neander to inspire and encourage those who wanted to follow Christ, interpret Scripture, and have a sound theology without being any the less "scientific".:

> "But of this I am certain, that the fall of the old form of the doctrine of Inspiration, and, indeed, of many other doctrinal prejudices, will not only not involve the fall of the essence of the Gospel, but will cause it no detriment whatever. Nay, I believe that it will be more clearly and accurately understood; that men will be better prepared to fight with and to conquer that inrushing infidelity against which the weapons of the old dogmatism must be powerless in any land; and that from such a struggle a new theology, purified and renovated in the spirit of the Gospel, must arise. Everywhere we see signs of a new creation; the Lord will build himself, in science as well as in life, a tabernacle in which to dwell; and neither a stubborn adherence to antiquity, nor a profane appetite for novelty, can hinder this work of the Lord which is now preparing. May we never forget the words of the great apostle, 'Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty'."[2]

In a sense Tholuck was right in telling Chalmers that only by

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1. Ibid. pp. 486, 487.
2. Ibid. pp. viii, ix.

studying the destructive, rationalistic criticism at its source could the most effective answer be given. Historical criticism was here to stay, and it did panic those who held to a mechanical view of inspiration. The answer provided by Tholuck and Neander countered with an emphasis on the correlation between "the humble, self-denying self-submission of our spirits" and the image of the risen Christ; an "unfettered" but not indifferent criticism enabled them to do just this. As yet however -- as Milligan was to learn and point out -- there were no settled scientific principles of textual criticism. Consequently a psychologism was allowed to take the place of the enemy's rationalism. This made possible the postulation of the one-to-one relationship between the individual consciousness -- or the consciousness of the community of believers -- and the objective fact of (the image of) the risen Lord. Herein we can detect how nearly the Platonic dichotomy between the intelligible world and the sensible world came to being closed: there was the subjective consciousness of the individual (or church) in a contemporaneous relationship to the objective, historical, archetypal image of the Redeemer.

Only by the recognition that the subjective, psychological factor itself had been gathered up within the objective glorified humanity of Christ could theology be built on a more truly scientific basis and the dichotomy be seen as having been displaced by God in Christ Jesus.

Nevertheless, what Milligan found in Tholuck and Neander was a beneficial Christo-centripetal movement away from a rationalistic,

mechanical apologetics in which not much freedom had been given to the Spirit:

> "It must be regarded as one of the greatest boons which the purifying process of Protestant theology in Germany has conferred upon faith as well as science, that the old mechanical view of Inspiration has been so generally abandoned. That doctrine, and the forced harmonies to which it led, demanded a clerk-like accuracy in the evangelical accounts, and could not admit even the slightest contradictions in them; but we are now no more compelled to have recourse to subtilties [sic] against which our sense of truth rebels. In studying the historical connexion of our Saviour's life and actions by the application of an unfettered criticism, we reach a different sense in many of his sayings than the bonds of the old dogmatism would have allowed. The inquiring reason need no longer find its free sense of truth opposed to faith; nor is reason bound to subjugate herself, not to faith, but to arbitrary dogmas and artificial hypotheses. The chasms in the Gospel history were unavoidable in the transmission of Divine truth through such lowly human means. The precious treasure has come to us in earthen vessels. But this only affords room for the exercise of our faith -- a faith whose root is to be found, not in science, not in demonstration, but in the humble and self-denying submission of our spirits. Our scientific views may be but fragmentary; but our religious interests will find all that is necessary to attach them to CHRIST as the ground of salvation and the archetype of holiness."[1]

C. The Contribution of Edinburgh and Germany

Because we have been considering the development of Milligan's theology we are enabled to understand why it was important for us to look at "the silent years" as closely as possible. The two undergraduate essays have shown us how Milligan's theology developed during the St. Andrews years; and an acquaintance (on the part of the author, at least) with his mature theology has served as a guide in the tracing of the further development of his theology resulting from Milligan's studies at the University of Edinburgh and

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1. Ibid. p. 9.

then in Germany, under the providence of God.

What then was that development in Edinburgh and in Germany? Basically it was a movement -- while maintaining his high regard for evidence -- away from the mechanical towards the organic, from the abstract to the concrete. In sum, it was a movement from abstract God and abstract man towards the Incarnation, the Logos made flesh in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Though perhaps overdrawn for the purpose of emphasis the first stage may be represented as follows:

Instead of mission there is apology; and reason is the common ground of argument. Revelation is identified with the propositional content of Scripture. Scripture is the plenary verbal inspiration of God, to be taken on faith and internal evidence. But for the purpose of argument with those who do not accept such a view of Revelation, the need for Revelation, as well as its truth, can be proven by induction. The miracles, violations of the course of nature, could not have been wrought by man. Natural theology, on the principles of which Revelation itself is based, gives us the reasonable ground for accepting the miracles as the acts of a good and just God. Man, in spite of his fallen condition, has intact within his mind the principle of causality, an "intuitive" principle built into the constitution of his nature and compelling him to reason from effect to adequate cause. In this way man reasons to God, the First Cause and Creator. Thus God is known mediately by inference. The only things we really know "intuitively" are the principles of the mind. Things "out there" cannot really be

known intuitively in themselves, for involved in the act of perception is the act of Judgment, which in itself is already an inference. Therefore whatever is known "out there" can be known only as an effect of a temporally antecedent cause. Pure intuition is known only in the mind, in which man knows intuitively, not only the principle of causality but the distinction between right and wrong. Having acknowledged the good God, the First Cause and Creator of Nature, it is simply a matter of reason to understand that miracles, performed by one claiming to be God's messenger, corroborate the truth of the doctrine delivered by the messenger from God, who is too good and just to want to fool his creatures and would not allow his doctrine to contradict the truths of natural theology. Here there is little need of the demonstration of the Holy Spirit; and the Logos is reduced to logic, or the principle of (non-)contradiction.

The second stage, culminating in Germany, may be represented as follows:

The Tholuck-Neander school follows Schleiermacher in the belief that God is known intuitively, immediately in the feeling of pious self-awareness or dependence. Man's knowledge of God is then more than a rationalistic knowing and involves the affection. God is felt to be the non-objective, unitary, absolute Cause. The relation between this religion-in-general and Christianity is that of a lower potential to a higher within the wider realm of consciousness. From the feeling of guilt and the feeling of redemption one is enabled to move to the historical causes of his own

sin and the redemption that is in the absolutely potentiated and vigorous God-consciousness of Christ, whose archetypal image is what the Church even now lives from. Both Tholuck and Neander differed from Schleiermacher in holding that the resurrection was an essential action in the constitution of the Christ-image which created and sustains the Church. Neander differed from Tholuck in holding that the risen body of Christ during the "Forty Days" prior to the Ascension was an already glorified body and not just "an essential change potentially in bodily organisation", according to Tholuck, awaiting its completion by the ascension.[1] Neander then moved further in the direction of history and fact and eschatology by basing his theology on the objective fact of the risen, revealed Jesus and the "recognised" belief that He was and is the God-man, the archetypal Redeemer. Neander viewed these two presuppositions as though they were in a one-to-one relationship. The risen Christ himself was the cause of His image being impressed upon the apostolic witnesses; it is the archetypal image, encountered in history and made powerful by the Spirit of Christ, that called forth, as it were, by a galvanic action the corresponding archetype of the inward revelation of God in the depths of the higher self-consciousness. And it is the archetypal image of the Risen Christ that empowers the consciousness of the community of believers. Christian theology then, or dogmatics, takes its rise from and is currently dependent upon the controlling archetypal image of the risen One.

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1. A. Tholuck, Commentary on the Gospel of St. John, trans. from the last German edition by C. Krauth, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1860, p. 414.

We readily see how the theology of the second stage differs from that of the first stage. From the idea of the block-like character of Scripture dropped from heaven, Milligan moved to a more organic conception of revelation, involving the person as well as the message of the Lord and incorporating the miraculous as an essential organ within the body of that which was revealed. Even in his undergraduate writings on the evidences Milligan saw the miracles as standing in an important relationship to doctrine; now, very likely through the teaching of Neander, he came to see the revelation of the risen Redeemer as the focal point and interpreting centre for the construction of a theology and the understanding of the person and work of Christ, the life and faith of the believer, and the nature and mission of the Church.

By-products of this new understanding were, of course, emancipation from the old mechanical view of inspiration and the right to use the historical method without anxiety; this we shall consider in the next chapter. A question we will want to be keeping in mind is: Did Milligan ever go beyond Tholuck and Neander in regard to their basic position, that of the Platonic dichotomy between the κόσμος νοητός and the κόσμος αἰσθητός ?

Milligan returned from Germany to the parish of Cameron, probably about the latter part of 1846, to resume his ministry there; and, as far as is known, his health was no longer giving cause for anxiety.

We are provided a revealing glimpse of Milligan two years after his return from Germany, in a letter written by John Tulloch, then

minister at Dundee and later Principal of St. Mary's College, St. Andrews. The letter was written on the fourteenth of February 1848 to the Rev. Dr. Dickson. Tulloch himself had just returned from "taking the cure" in Germany:

> "...Neander is my favourite theological author... I have been reading with immense relish some of Neander's miscellaneous writings.... What a splendid old fellow he is! How rich and pregnant his thoughts! how dry and penetrating his critical gaze! how free and healthful his historical spirit! how suggestive altogether! I perfectly feast on him... I say nothing of my residence and ramble in Germany (which, en passant, has done me a great deal of good - not only in a corporal point of view, but also I trust, in an intellectual) although I sometimes startle some good folks here with expression of my sympathy for some of the peculiar views of the German scientific school of theology... Willy [later Sir William] Ramsay, to whom above all I preach 'the more excellent way' of the German theology, and than whom I know nobody who would derive more benefit from its study if he would only fairly open his mind to it, is here... We drove out... to Cameron and dined with Milligan, and had our fill of Germanism with him, as well as of beefsteak."[1]

1. Oliphant, A Memoir of the Life of John Tulloch, D.D., LL.D. William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1888, p. 66.

CHAPTER IV

LIFE, EVIDENCE, AND THE NARROWING OF THE CIRCLE

A. The Discipline of the Parish Ministry

If, as we believe and as William Milligan himself believed, theology is a function of the Church, the fifteen years Milligan served in the parish ministry are to be looked upon, from the point of view of his theological work, as the training ground of the theologian. It was surely the discipline of a faithful ministry that helped to furnish Milligan with both inspiration and guidance in the development of his theology.

1. The Value of the Personal Touch

While yet in Germany Milligan had written the people of Cameron parish that his hope of returning to them

> "with more ability to perform my important duties, forms one of the most cheering considerations which can animate me in this distant land. Do you, my friends, unite your prayers with mine, that when I come again to you it may be with the fulness of the Gospel of Christ, and with the will and resolution to spend and be spent in this holy service."[1]

Milligan returned from Germany not only with a knowledge of German but also with a new and higher appreciation of the work of the Spirit in contact with man's heart, controlling both the life and theology of the minister, and leading him in his ministry to the people of his parish. Undoubtedly Milligan ministered faithfully, lovingly, and effectively.

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1. A.Milligan, In Memoriam, William Milligan, D.D., The University Press, Aberdeen, 1894, p. 12.

> "In 1850 he was appointed to the Parish of Kilconquhar. Here too he threw himself into his ministerial work with all the energy and earnestness of his nature. He had a very strong conviction of the value of close personal intercourse between a pastor and his flock."[1]

2. The Sacraments and the Discipline of the Church

Though William Milligan was later to lay great stress on the importance of the Sacraments it was not with a view that an opus operatum is involved. There was a place for human freedom and responsibility, which opinion is recorded not only in Milligan's theological writings but also earlier in a session record book:

> "The Moderator stated to the Session that David Pearson, Earlsferry, had applied to him for Baptism for his children but that he had refused to comply with his request in consequence of his long neglect of public ordinances. The Session agreed that Baptism be withheld so long as he continues to absent himself from Church."[2]

In regard to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper it is worthy of note that, according to the minutes of the Session Record Books of the Cameron and the Kilconquhar Parish Churches, this sacrament was being celebrated annually when Milligan first arrived in the Cameron Parish, twice a year when he left there, and twice a year while he served in the Kilconquhar parish. In the light of the actual practice of the two churches Milligan served, which was the custom in that day, it is especially interesting to learn of the opinion he expressed shortly before his death in 1893:

> "He was lying in bed in his daughter's house, and he told me he was convinced that the most pressing need of the Church of Scotland was the revival of the weekly Eucharist."[3]

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1. Ibid. pp. 12, 13.
2. Session Record Book, Kilconquhar Parish Church, 23 Oct. 1859.
3. J. Cooper, "William Milligan", Aurora Borealis, Aberdeen University Appreciations, 1860-1889, University Printers, Aberdeen, 1899, p.187.

3. Ministry to the Body of the Church and to the Whole Parish

As a minister concerned with the whole of life William Milligan gave close attention not only to the spiritual welfare of his people but also to their education and their bodily well-being.

> "...unweariedly he went out and in among them in temporal as well as in spiritual things. By every means in his power he sought to help and instruct and raise his people, and long before the days when the importance of anything relating to hygiene and sanatory [sic] arrangements was felt and discussed as it is now, he had on evenings during the week been delivering courses of lectures in his parish on such subjects as ventilation, healthy homes, water supply, etc."[1]

> "The Moderator reported to the Session that for some time past and notwithstanding repeated remonstrances upon his part, Mr. Wilkie, Teacher, Earlsferry, had been greatly neglecting his duties, that the school was in an unsatisfactory condition, and that more especially the teaching due to Alex. Farnie, pupil apprentice in the school, had not been given. The Session having considered all the circumstances of the case, feel that there is no other alternative but to dismiss Mr. Wilkie, and to proceed as soon as possible to the election of a successor. They requested the Moderator to communicate this to Mr. Wilkie."[2]

Lest we think that William Milligan's concern for the right kind of education was confined to his own parish we should note that in 1857 he wrote a "Letter to the Duke of Argyll on the Education Question".[3] Nor are we to suppose that this concern for the whole life of the people was the result of a merely humanitarian impulse or the putting into practice of a merely liberal social programme, for actually William Milligan looked to the risen Lord in his

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1. A. Milligan, In Memoriam, William Milligan, D.D., The University Press, Aberdeen, 1894, p. 13.
2. Session Record Book, Kilconquhar Parish Church, 18 Apr. 1858.
3. W. Milligan, "Letter to the Duke of Argyll on the Education Question", Sutherland and Knox, 1857.

glorified humanity in the midst of His Church as the inspiration of his ministry to the whole person in the whole of society.

> "It was these wide and warm human feelings of his, this enthusiasm for humanity, for liberty, and for progress that made him a Liberal in politics, and in his early days allied him with those who were called Broad Churchmen, but at no period of his life had he the slightest sympathy with that disregard for doctrine which has sometimes marked the members of that school."[1]

Let us then acknowledge that, in attempting to detect the various influences upon William Milligan in the development of his theology, we are not to shut our eyes to the certain working of the Holy Spirit in the body of the Church, in the week to week preparation and delivery of sermons, in the prayers for and with the people, and in the meeting of the temporal needs of the parish.

B. Theology in Formation and Publication

As William Milligan continued to study the Scriptures and to develop a theology he, of course, did so within the context of what he had been taught in Scotland and what he had learned in Germany and was deriving from his reading of German Biblical and theological works.

1. Estimate of German Theology, 1853

We are fortunate to possess an insight into Milligan's appraisal of the German scene, provided by what has so far proved to be his earliest published contribution to a theological journal. This estimation of German theology appears in the correspondence section

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1. A. Milligan, In Memoriam, William Milligan, D.D., The University Press, Aberdeen, 1894, p. 13.

of the Journal of Sacred Literature for October 1853. The letter is a review of the work entitled The Christian Doctrine of Sin, by Julius Müller, who, it will be recalled, was teaching at the University at Halle while Milligan was there. Let us note how he looked upon that work and upon German theology as a whole, especially in its relation to the theological needs of the Scotland of his day. In referring to "Dr. Müller's great work", Milligan goes on to say:

> "I consider it one of the most important contributions which have been made of late years to the science of theology, either at home or abroad. In Germany it has enjoyed a very wide circulation; it has established the claims of its already well-known author to be considered one of the most genial writers of the day; and an extensive study of it, even in its English dress, cannot fail both to deepen and quicken the stream of theological opinion in our own land."[1]

Milligan places Müller within the spectrum of German theology; and herein we at last become acquainted -- after the speculations of the last chapter -- with Milligan's own views:

> "I conceive that I shall best promote the profit of your readers if I make one or two remarks upon the position which Professor Müller occupies in the strangely varied theological circles of his country, upon the objects which he has in view in this particular work, and upon the results which might be expected to flow from its engaging the attention of our own theologians at home. Müller is a disciple of Neander. In the preface of the first edition of his work he speaks of him as 'his beloved and honoured teacher Neander'; and to the time when he sat at the feet of that truly Christian and noble-minded instructor he traces the formation of those views and impulses which led to most of the investigations whose results, in one form or another, he has since given to the world. Imbued thus, at an early period of his life, with the principles of one who exercised a power over his students hardly ever equalled in the academical chair [my emphasis -- Is not this the testimony of first-hand experience?], Müller occupies a kind of midway position between the strict orthodoxy upon the one hand,

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1. The Journal of Sacred Literature, ed. H. Burgess, Blackader & Co., London, 1853, new series V, p. 207. It should be stated that this letter is signed with the initials "W.M." The evidence, external and internal, points to William Milligan's authorship.

> whose most distinguished representative is to be found in Hengstenberg and those multiplied forms of heterodoxy, upon the other, whose representatives are to be found in that 'legion' of German teachers who prefer the untried to the tried, and pursue the startling rather than the true. He belongs to the same class to which, disregarding some slight differences by which they may be separated from one another, we should assign Nitzsch and Twesten, and Tholuck and Dorner, and Lücke, and Ullmann, and Harlesz; in short almost all in whose learning the inquiring spirit of the present generation may have confidence, and to the deep reality of whose Christian convictions humble piety can look in hope. Profoundly penetrated by the conviction that Christianity is from God, receiving the Scriptures as a revelation of his will, and looking to the gospel as the leavening principle of the world, it is the main effort of these celebrated teachers so to bring it into connection with the spirit of man that the 'answer in the breast' may be its chiefest evidence; that it may not only be a revelation to him, but may become a revelation in him, and that thus it may assume its highest and noblest form not merely of a doctrine but of a life."[1]

What is revealed above -- discovered after the writing of the third chapter -- happily corroborates the points made regarding the chief impressions made upon William Milligan during his stay in Germany; for we detect his enlivened belief in the leavening power of the Gospel as well as his estimation of the "chiefest evidence" of life responding to Life.

But Milligan was not without his reservations:

> "I will not say that in all respects I am prepared to adopt their conclusions. In particular it is impossible not to feel that the subjectivity of their system endangers the simplicity with which we are to receive the Bible as a perfect revelation of the will of God, unsettles our notions of inspiration, and lies at the bottom of much of the nonsense now uttered in our own country, with regard to changing the form of our doctrines while yet preserving their substance."[2]

Such a reaction to the dangers of subjectivism, even in Germany's

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1. Ibid. pp. 207, 208.
2. Ibid. p. 208.

best theology at that time, we might have expected from William Milligan, who had been instilled with great reverence for the Word of God and had been trained to have profound respect for documentary evidence. That his Scottish heritage still controlled even his appreciation for and learning from the Germans is indicated by the following:

> "In the main, however, the efforts of the class to which we refer seem more calculated than those of any other to meet the peculiar conditions and heal the peculiar wounds of Germany. Around this band most of the interest, if not all the violence, of the struggle centres. We feel that they will fail in many respects, or rather we anticipate that, before they attain that final triumph which we earnestly trust is in store for them, they will be led beyond their present standing point, and that their theology will be of a still more positive and dogmatic character than it is at present. Christianity to be effective must be dogmatic, just because it cannot separate itself from the past without ceasing to exist. This, however, has to be yet in some degree learned by the theologians in Germany."[1]

And now we are enabled to see how Milligan regarded the task of theology in relation to the theology of the past and the need of the present:

> "I would recommend it [Müller's treatise] as a work peculiarly needed at the present time. We shall strive in vain to render our theology suitable to the wants of the age by the mere republication of the works of our old divines... Let him [the student] imbibe the spirit of the past, but let him imbibe it in the scenes of the past, and not in those of a fictitious present. On the other hand, however, we shall still more vainly strive to meet the wants of our time by talking much and vaguely about reconstituting our theology. It is on the old doctrines that we must take our stand, which have proved themselves the power of God in time past, and will, I doubt not, prove themselves not less so in time to come. Let us view them in relation to our own felt wants; let us see what modern science and modern learning have to say to them; but let us

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1. Ibid. pp. 208, 209.

> believe that these are to come, not as their masters, but as their servants, not to change, but to defend and adorn them."[1]

And we shall learn, if we are not already acquainted with his work, how William Milligan defended and adorned "the old doctrines" of the resurrection, ascension, and heavenly priesthood of Jesus Christ.

In describing the spirit of Müller's theology and in expressing the wish that Scotland's theology might have the same spirit, William Milligan delineated the characteristics that were to be exhibited in his own theology:

> "Thoroughly independent in the spirit of his inquiry, he yet loves and venerates the spirit of the past, acknowledges its truthfulness, and feels its power. At the same time he lives in the present, knows its opinions, tests its modes of thought, receives what he can that is valuable, and judges soundly in regard to many of its pretensions. This is the spirit which I wish to see in our theology."[2]

2. An Opinion that was Changed

Having become acquainted with William Milligan's estimate of German theology and his judgment regarding the standards of genuine theology, we turn now briefly to the import of another letter he wrote -- four years later, in 1857 -- to the editor of the same journal.[3] This correspondence, when compared to his later writings, affords another opportunity to notice that there was indeed a development in Milligan's theology.

Having in Germany learned that the revelation of the risen Lord

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1. Ibid. pp. 209, 210.
2. Ibid. p. 210.
3. The Journal of Sacred Literature and Biblical Record, ed. H. Burgess, W. Oliphant & Son, Edinburgh, 1857, v. pp. 419-424.

had an even more central place in Christian life and theology than he had been aware of previously, he nevertheless had yet to work it out in its relation to theology as a whole.

Milligan wrote to oppose the view, taken by William Tait of Rugby in an earlier article, that ἐκ θανάτου in Hebrews 5.7 should be translated "out of death" rather than "from death". Later Milligan was to change his opinion in favour of "out of", not only for Hebrews 5.7 but also for John 12.27, where we are to read, not Father, save me "from", but Father, save me "out of" this hour.[1]

This later change was involved in the shift from viewing redemption merely as a legal transaction and a logical inference from the past fact of Jesus' sacrificial death, to its being seen as a present life in Christ, who by passing through death had swallowed it up and is even now offering Himself and, in Himself, His body the church unto the Father.

3. Publication of Biblical and Theological Standpoint

We must turn from such anticipation, however, and continue to trace the development of Milligan's theology as it moved, not around the evidential, but through it to the perspective glimpsed above.

In 1858 the Journal of Sacred Literature published a paper by Milligan on "The Relation between the Teaching of the Apostles St. Paul and St. James on Justification".[2] This article, especially

1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of our Lord. MacMillan & Co. Ltd., London, 1905 (first edition, 1881), pp. 124, 126.

2. The Journal of Sacred Literature and Biblical Record, ed. H. Burgess, W. Oliphant and Co., Edinburgh, 1858, VII, pp. 277-304.

important as an indication of the stance he was assuming over against the upholders of "mechanical" inspiration in Britain as well as the "neologists" of Tübingen, combined what Milligan had learned of the organic view in the Tholuck-Neander School with the Scottish rigorous regard for the Word of God. Perhaps the subject was chosen for the very purpose of highlighting the differences between the two extremes and of setting forth what Milligan believed to be the proper approach of the Biblical critic and interpreter:

> "It ought to interest us more especially on this ground, that the question can only be properly discussed when we consider it in connexion with the whole teaching of the two apostles immediately concerned, their general relation to each other and the particular difference of administration which was given to each of them to discharge. Such a point of view has unfortunately been too much neglected by our English commentators, who, in their anxiety to make out an entire agreement between the two apostles, even in the letter, have shut their eyes to the difference which seems actually to exist between them. It has been still more flagrantly abused by a large number of the German critics, who, anxious rather to make out a disagreement, have mistaken a want of uniformity for a want of unity, and lost sight of that gradual unfolding of the truth given us in Christ Jesus which, as much perhaps as any other feature of the Scriptures, illustrates the divine wisdom of their structure and their beautiful adaptation to the wants of man."[1]

Milligan best stated his own position in the following words:

> "The method of teaching which marks each apostle, has its common origin in the Lord Jesus Christ. 'In Him was Life'. These words express to us the secret of the whole delineation of truth afterwards given by any of the apostles. Had our Lord been simply, or even mainly, a teacher of doctrine [we will remember that this was close to the view Milligan had held in his college essays], the only task that would have remained for the disciples would have been to repeat that doctrine, to illustrate it by fresh illustrations, to apply it in argument, exhortation or entreaty, to those to whom they spoke. But more was appointed them to do. Salvation was given in Christ Jesus. 'In him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily'. That fulness then had to be unfolded. It

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1. Ibid. p. 277.

> had to be presented to the minds of men in such a manner that they should not merely feel it, but that they should be able to think of it, and to grasp its parts in intelligent consciousness of what they held. Here, accordingly, with the principle of unity there was also room for diversity. And all that can be asked is that, in every teacher whose writings have been handed down to us, claiming to be inspired, we be able to discover on the one hand, a correct representation of at least a part, or of one aspect of the truth given in Christ himself; and, on the other hand, nothing contradictory, either to the words of his Lord, or of any of his fellow-teachers, possessed equally with himself, of inspiration."[1]

And it is within such an understanding of revelation and doctrine that Milligan found nothing contradictory between the doctrine of James and that of Paul. Each apostle was related to Jesus in truth, but each had his own "standing point" and received specific impressions or aspects of the truth, as it is in Jesus.

> "James, it would seem, is to be regarded as an entirely independent writer, unfolding Christian truth in the particular form in which the "one spirit" had impressed it on his mind."[2]

The doctrines of James and Paul are not identical, due to their different standpoints; but Jesus was the common source of inspiration and doctrine. Faith in Christ is the means whereby the life that is in Him is realised for the believer; but -- and here we detect a basic distinction -- doctrine (or theology) is the result of an analysis, by the mind's reflecting on faith or on the forms impressed by the 'one spirit' on the mind; theology, therefore, is not the product of a reflecting on Christ. Put in another way, faith is the subjective response to the gospel of life as it is in Christ; theology is the result of an analysis of that faith.

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1. Ibid. p. 302.
2. Ibid. p. 281.

Again, faith has Christ as object; theology's object is faith.

Milligan's idea of the development of doctrine, of theology, was in essence that of Neander. Historically, there were the various aspects of the fulness of Christ impressed on the Apostolic minds, to be unfolded in respect to the demands of communication and over against the opposition. There was a progress in the doctrinal unfolding of the life as it is in Christ, as the Apostles confronted ever more subtle errors and conflicts. The doctrines of James are the result of little analysis. With Peter there was more analysis. Paul gave us the ultimate in analysis, and John gave us the doctrine of one who had followed the analysis and reintegrated doctrine into the basically simple but profound relationship to Jesus Christ as the Way and the Truth and the Life. The 'one spirit' was and is the leaven which leavens.

There follows Milligan's description of Paul's ultimate analysis of faith, which he, Paul, saw to be the principle of life in every Christian.

Paul's doctrine

> "is not precisely the same [as that of James], for Paul distinctly teaches justification by faith alone, without reference to the works in which that faith issues, with sole reference to its apprehending the mercy of God in Christ... throughout the whole of his epistles, one truth is evidently the central one, the truth which he was peculiarly to proclaim, in which the very essence of the Gospel lay: that man, under the sentence of death through sin, obtains mercy only through the grace of God, as a free gift, appropriated by faith, and by faith alone; so that, daring as the insertion was, it is impossible to say that Luther did not, at least, express simply the meaning of the apostle's teaching, when in Rom. iii. 28, he inserted the word 'alone': 'Therefore we conclude, that a man is qualified alone by faith', etc.... It is essential to his [Paul's] unfolding of Christian truth that faith, however loving, however

> afterwards productive, immediately productive, of good works, should yet, in the moment of justification, stand alone."[1]

Salvation is made available to man by the work of Christ in the fulfilling of the covenant of grace, which is

> "a covenant into which we can only be again introduced through faith in an objective work whereby we are reconciled to God."[2]

This salvation is life, but it is also truth; and this life and truth must be experienced and known in accordance with the constitution of man, in order to be appropriated:

> "The same general law by which He [Jesus Christ] himself taught, a law not arbitrary, but founded in the eternal conditions of the human mind [my emphasis], was to be still observed, and gradually, as circumstances require it, or as human experience cast light upon that which is emphatically the life of man, were his apostles to enter into possession of all that revelation which was contained in him."[3]

Milligan used the phrase "the eternal conditions of the human mind", and stated that Jesus himself in his teaching observed the general law founded on those eternal conditions. The quotations from this article should indicate what Milligan probably regarded those conditions to be.

In the first place, it is to be noted that he is continuing to hold to the belief, taught him in Germany as well as in Scotland, that there are eternal conditions of the human mind, conditions which neither the Fall nor Jesus Christ had altered.

Secondly, we cannot but note, however, that there was a change in Milligan's view of the nature of those eternal conditions.

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1. Ibid. pp. 287, 288.
2. Ibid. pp. 295, 296.
3. Ibid. p. 291.

Thirdly, the essence of the alteration of view is that which marks a change from the belief that man knows God indirectly -- by inference from effect to cause -- to the belief that man knows God immediately in his consciousness. The change, then, involved a shift away from the discursive reason to the immediacy of the life of God in the soul, to immediate spiritual awareness as central to man's knowing.

Another consequence of this change was the different way in which evidence came to be regarded. The "chiefest" evidence now, was the evidence of the heart responding to "life"; the external evidence was then to be seen both as a check on and guide to the true life of the spirit.

As regards faith, whereas before it tended to be seen as subject to the mechanical necessity of cause and effect or as the end result of a logical demonstration, now it was the principle of life, the very life of God in the soul. By faith in Christ the fulness of life, which man's sin had stifled in himself, was communicated to the believer. Then, and only then, was the discursive intellect to go to work on the experience of faith and unfold that fulness, analyse that life. Both the words of Christ and the words of the Apostles' analysis of their own faith in Him reflect the eternal ideas in the mind of God. This immediate perception of these ideas would not be possible apart from sharing in the life of God and knowing him through "the one spirit". This life of God in the soul, therefore, was to be regarded as the one genuine source of knowledge and will; hereby the moral element, previously represented by the

conscience alone, was incorporated into the act of knowing.

Accordingly, when Milligan wrote of Christ Himself conforming His teaching to "the eternal conditions of the human mind", he very likely meant that Christ himself presupposed that before men could comprehend His instruction and Himself it was necessary that they be predisposed by a spirit related to God. Indeed, we will find that such was Milligan's interpretation of the teaching of his favourite Gospel, St. John's.

Such was the new view indicated by these early writings, the effect of Milligan's sojourn in Germany. Freed there from the mechanical, he now wanted to apply this spiritual insight to the interpretation of Scripture and to theology. As we have seen, he was aware of the danger of a merely subjective idea of spirituality, not under the guidance of the external evidence of Scripture. It appears, therefore, that Milligan's chief aim, in the further pursuit of his Scriptural and Theological studies, was the harmonic integration and enhancement of this "life", this "spirit" known by faith in Christ, within the objective standard of God's Word or vice versa; thereby, the Spirit would enliven the Word, and the Word guide the Spirit. Whatever the Spirit seemed to teach could not be in contradiction to the evidence of the written Word; at the same time Scripture could no longer be regarded as merely a stockpile of doctrine, to be systematised by the theologian and expanded by inference.

C. The Chair of Biblical Criticism at Aberdeen

William Milligan had published his Biblical and Theological position in 1858. In September that year he became engaged to Anne Mary Moir, daughter of the physician-poet David McBeth Moir, well known as "Delta" of Blackwood's Magazine. In October Milligan's father died. In February of 1859 the wedding took place; and for eighteen months Milligan and his bride lived in the Kilconquhar manse, where George, the first of eleven children, was born. At this time William Milligan was to receive an appointment which would necessitate the further explication of his views relating to the science of Biblical criticism and interpretation.

> "In 1860 the chair of Biblical Criticism was founded in the University of Aberdeen, and your father became a candidate for it. In addition to his ordinary Parochial work he had always been an earnest and hard student, and had written various articles on Biblical and critical subjects which had attracted much attention. High testimony was borne to his fitness for the post, and he was successful in his application. In the Autumn of 1860 we went North to Aberdeen for the session."[1]

1. Milligan's Courses of Lectures

The usual session at Aberdeen opened during the second week of December and closed near the end of March; and, according to the calendar of the University, Milligan met with his Divinity Hall class one hour a day.[2]

There follows a description of Milligan's courses of lectures:

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1. M. Milligan, In Memoriam, William Milligan, D.D., The University Press, Aberdeen, 1894, p. 16.
2. The Aberdeen University Calendar for the Sessions 1860-61 to 1863-64, The University Press, Aberdeen, pp. 14, 15.

"The Patronage of this Chair is vested in the Crown. The Lectures of the Class are comprehended in Three Courses, and are, at present, delivered in successive Sessions.

I. The First Course embraces:- (1) The Principles of Textual Criticism, together with an account of the most important MSS., Versions, and Editions of the New Testament; (2) The Principles of Interpretation, with Historical Notices of the different Schools of interpretation which have existed in different ages of the Christian Church.

II. The Second Course embraces the Practical Application of the Principles of Textual Criticism and Interpretation:- (1) to One of the books of the New Testament; (2) to Selected Passages.

III. The Third Course embraces the General Study of (1) The Gospels, their Origin, Relation to one another and Special Characteristics; together with an examination of the Chief Modern Theories of their Character as Historical Records; (2) the Epistles of the New Testament, the circumstances in which they were written, and the particular purposes of each; together with the unity and diversity of the Apostles' teaching.

Lectures on these subjects are delivered thrice a week. A fourth day of the week is divided between Hebrew Antiquities and the Practical Expositions by the students, of passages of the New Testament previously prescribed. On a fifth day of the week the students read one of the books of the New Testament.

From time to time, during the Session, the Greek Critical Exercises of the students are delivered in the presence of the class and criticised by the Professor. Written examinations are also occasionally held upon the work of the several preceding weeks, a selection from the answers afterwards read in the class."[1]

2. William Milligan as Teacher and Spiritual Father

In Reminiscences, by W.S. Bruce, there are several descriptions of William Milligan as a teacher and as a spiritual father to his students. A selection of the descriptions is given below:

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1. The Aberdeen University Calendar for the Year 1864-65, Wyllie & Son, Aberdeen, 1864, pp. 24, 25. It is of interest to note that in Moral Philosophy the students were still reading Thomas Reid (p. 15); the two texts listed for Systematic Theology are Butler's Analogy and The Westminster Confession of Faith (p.22).

"One other Professor we met in our Arts Course. We had heard him preach in the College Chapel, and were fond of his silvery-toned voice, and his eloquent and fluent speech. But now we met him in the class, optional of course, of Christian Evidences. He introduced us to much recent thought about Religion. All the theological world had been deeply stirred by that daring book, Renan's 'Vie de Jesus'. We were captured more by Dr. Milligan's thorough honesty in the treatment of the irreverent Frenchman than by the jeu d'esprit of the latter.

His lectures gave great confirmation to our young minds, at that time much perplexed about fundamental verities.

For Bain had made us furiously think: had in fact startled us out of our slumber and made us giddy with metaphysical arguments from Democritus down to John Stuart Mill. The miracles were moonshine. The Uniformity of Nature ruled. Calvin was not Calvinistic enough. Everything evolved from gaseous matter: the world is in flux: all is moving on to a great and good goal, and that is God.

Then came Martin. 'Don't go to Science: go to your Bible. What shall it profit you though you gain the whole world? You lose your soul and everything else. Be born again. Think and feel, and will as God does. That's the beginning and end of Moral Philosophy'.

Between the two teachers of our tertian and magistrand years we swithered and staggered. Was it any wonder? We seemed to be living in a realm of contradictories. Was religion a supernatural extravagance founded on ignorance of Natural Laws? That question had different effects on different minds.

Milligan came to our rescue. Christianity has its own evidences. The heart may have reasons (Pascal said it) of which the head is not fully cognisant. But religion does not bar thinking. It wants you to think more, not less. Man's mind is the organ, and man's conscience the voice of the Eternal Reason. It is along this line that the Soul of the Universe comes to speaking terms with our Consciousness. God fashioned for Himself a body and form in humanity. Christ is God Incarnate. You will never get beyond Him. Trust Him, love Him, be like Him.

It met our mental needs, and greatly helped us. Jenkyns and Nicol and MacIntosh spoke most thankfully of the 'lift' they daily got. We took to the Evidences: and got our prizes. But the reward was better far than the books. We had looked into the face of Christ. Milligan had become a spiritual father to us. From that day we made tracks for the Sacred Ministry. Great is the gift to students of a clear honest thinker and of a calm reasoning mind.

We all owe much to Dr. Milligan. In after years in the Divinity Hall he grew still more upon us."[1]

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1. W. Bruce, Reminiscences, J. Bisset, Aberdeen, 1929, pp. 48, 49.

"...Along with lectures on one of the Gospels they [Lectures on the Apocalypse] sent us straight to the Greek Text of the New Testament. This was the very best thing that could have happened to us. For years our reading in Greek had been in historians and poets whose deities were heathen gods and goddesses. Now it took us to the inspired writings of Christianity; and we no longer found our literary studies in conflict with our religious faith.

Each day light broke upon our minds. The Professor's lectures were so luminous, so full of the highest learning combined with the best Gospel teaching that to us he became a real spiritual father. We were welcomed to his study whenever we might choose to carry to him any difficulty, and we made use of this kind invitation. He also urged us 'to walk the Hospital' while we were students, and with his advice we started visiting in a lane leading off the Gallowgate."[1]

"He had a strong imagination which added greatly to the interest of his lectures. Though confined to the exposition of the Greek of the New Testament, which might be prosy enough, they were always illumined by fine thinking."[2]

"Under Dr. Milligan we fell in love with the Epistles of St. John."[3]

"To Dr. Milligan we owed much, more than we can ever tell. To many of us he was a Spiritual Father. That is what every Christian teacher and preacher should aim at being. What higher reward can be won by the holder of a university chair?"[4]

D. Approach to the Science of Biblical Criticism

As we follow William Milligan in his approach to the discipline of Biblical criticism we will be able to understand and appreciate why his work, with all its emphasis on life and spirit, maintained a close tie to evidence. We will then know why he was asked to serve on the New Testament Revision Company and also why it was that his Church called for his services as depute clerk and clerk of the General Assembly.

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1. Ibid. pp. 71, 72.
2. Ibid. p. 74.
3. Ibid. p. 75.
4. Ibid. p. 76.

1. Background on the Handling of Evidence

Instruction in the handling of evidence had formed an important part of Milligan's education from the early days. We will recall that it is very likely that one of the "intruding subjects" -- i.e. subjects other than Latin and Greek -- that he studied at the Royal High School in Edinburgh was "The Evidences of Christianity". Through the use of Porteous's textbook the pupils were led to see that belief in the truth of Christianity is not a blind trust but is grounded in part at least on evidence, testimony. In addition to its primary purpose, and long before the inclusion of a course in natural science, this course served as a much needed supplement to a purely classical curriculum with its emphasis on form and rules and paradigms; and we shall discern that it was this early combination of the formal with the evidential that helped determine a distinctive characteristic of Milligan's theology. In short, to the knowledge of the tenets of Christianity -- undoubtedly learned in response to his father's catechetical questions -- and to the proficiency in analysis and synthesis induced by constant practice in grammar, syntax, and composition, to this knowledge and formal competency was added the evidential, upon which he could exercise his capacities in giving a sensible reason for the faith that was in him. Thereby room was made, within what must have been the rather authoritarian discipline in which he had thus far been trained, for a somewhat liberating appeal to evidence -- i.e. to that which could be seen and heard and touched.

At St. Andrews education in the formal process was continued in

the study of more Latin and more Greek, with the addition of mathematics and logic. There were two approaches to the handling of evidence. We will recall that the Moral Philosophy course, employing the "Common Sense" philosophy, in its apologetic reaction to Hume's critique of natural theology, grounded the demonstrative proof of truth, even in its use of evidence, upon an interior "intuitive" principle of causality, held to be constitutive of the human mind as created by God; thus was evidence forced into the rigid framework of a closed system. In the Natural Philosophy course, however, there being no apologetic need, the students were taught the use of induction in conjunction with the hypothetico-deductive method of how best to account for or explain the evidential particulars. To the extent that one hypothesis explained or accounted for the facts with more economy than another, to that extent it was to be deemed an adequate hypothesis, until contradicted by additional evidence or replaced by another hypothesis even more economical.

Though Milligan employed the former method in the handling of evidence in his college essay on the Evidence of Christianity, it was to the hypothetico-deductive method that he turned in his concept of the proper method to be employed in the science of textual criticism. Freed now from the apologetic necessity of proving truth, he could allow the evidence itself to help shape the hypothesis that would best account for it.

Although in Germany Milligan had learned that he did not have to prove truth by demonstration based on external evidence, he had

noticed that freedom from that kind of proof had been turned into license by those who had not seen that external evidence still demanded its proper handling. Much of the criticism and theology of Germany, following the ideal of the Enlightenment, had cut itself adrift from orthodoxy and was sailing off in every direction. The philosophical basis -- mainly Hegelian -- of most of the Tübingen School of criticism had militated against any settled principles of criticism; and evidence was being used as a vehicle of the dialectic rather than as the basis of a truly scientific handling of the documents. We will recall Milligan's designation of these neological schools as "those multiplied forms of heterodoxy...whose representatives are to be found in that 'legion' of German teachers who prefer the untried to the tried, and pursue the startling rather than the true".[1] And though Neander with his "pectoral theology" had led him to believe that the "answer in the breast" is the "chiefest evidence" for the spirit of man having been brought under the leavening influence of the Gospel,[2] William Milligan was far from wanting to discount the place of external evidence in the documents of history, especially in the Biblical documents.

2. Guidance from Samuel P. Tregelles

Obviously Milligan had entered deeply into the problem of determining the proper way of dealing with the evidence of the various readings and thereby constructing the New Testament text that would

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1. The Journal of Sacred Literature, ed. H. Burgess, Blackader and Co., London, 1853, new series V, p. 208.
2. Ibid. p. 208.

most nearly approach the autographs. Convinced as he must have been that the evidence itself should suggest those hypotheses by which it might best be evaluated or weighed, Milligan found in the work of Samuel Prideaux Tregelles the guidance for which he was looking, in order to be able to distinguish between genuine principles derived from the evidence and mere preconceptions of what that evidence ought to be. It was especially to Tregelles's Account of the Printed Text of the Greek New Testament, with Remarks on its Revision upon Critical Principles[1] to which Milligan turned, for, as he tells us in an important article on Tischendorf and Tregelles, it was the work "constituting by far the most valuable contribution ever made, either on the Continent or in England, to the principles of constructing the text from the point of view marking the school of criticism to which the author belonged."[2]

It was from this work that Milligan was able to orient himself in relation to the controversy over the construction of the New Testament text, a controversy

> "which we need have no hesitation in pronouncing one of the most important religious controversies of the day, and one fraught with far greater consequences to the future of the Church than is generally supposed."[3]

Everyone was agreed that the sources for the construction of the text were the MSS., the versions, and the citations from the

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1. S.P. Tregelles, An Account of the Printed Text of the Greek New Testament, Samuel Bagster & Sons, London, 1854.
2. W. Milligan, "Tischendorf, and Tregelles as Editors of the Greek New Testament", The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, XXV, 1876, p. 131.
3. Ibid. p. 132.

early Fathers, but the difference arose as to the method to be employed in the evaluation of the material.

Milligan knew that if the principles advocated by Tregelles were adopted, though there would be no material alteration in the faith of the Church,

> "yet they [those principles] may and do involve changes in her mode of presenting the truth, and in the light in which her members are to regard it; they lead to the removal of difficulties, historical and dogmatic, by which thousands are perplexed; and they lay the foundation for an appreciation of the divine will, which, in general clearness, liveliness and force, shall greatly surpass anything that the Church of Christ has enjoyed from at least the second century of her history."[1]

Whoever compares the differences between the Textus Receptus readings in the Gospel of St. John and those given by Tischendorf and Tregelles,

> "will be constrained to allow that the differences which do exist go to the very root of much that has a close bearing alike upon the speculative views and upon the practical life of the Church."[2]

William Milligan saw clearly that the controversy involved the way in which truth is to be presented and the way in which it is to be regarded; in short, it involved the relationship of evidence to truth. Indeed, it could be said that the entire development of Milligan's theology had to do with just that relationship. And what he learned in working out the proper relationship between theological truth and textual evidence helped to direct him to and confirm him in what he regarded as the focal point and interpretative centre of all theological truth. Such was the importance to Milligan of

1. Ibid. p. 134.
2. Ibid. pp. 134, 135.

this relationship that he seemed to hold that unless the correct principles of textual criticism by which the genuine text is constructed have at least been acknowledged by the interpreter of the Scriptures, the resulting interpretation of Scripture, along with the theology derived therefrom, would be such that if the same prepossessions determining the hermeneutics and the resultant theology were employed in the construction of the text itself, that text would differ considerably from the one which had been accepted by the interpreter-theologian without an acknowledgment of the principles employed in its construction.

As Milligan saw it, the difference in the handling of the textual evidence depended mainly on the weight that one school of critics gave to the more ancient, and the other school, to the more modern, authorities. He saw, too, that the principles inherent in the two approaches were not abstruse but such as could be understood by non-experts.

What had sharpened the debate, of course, was the realisation that the Textus Receptus, which for so long had been taken for granted, was drawn from imperfect sources. The tradition of Walton and Mill and Bentley had been carried on by Griesbach and Lachmann; and a more accurate text had begun to assert itself against the text from which the Authorised Version was translated and literally imprinted on the minds and hearts of generations. Naturally, a suggested alteration of the textual basis of the translation was regarded as a threat to truth and an irreverent innovation, for truth itself had been equated with a fixed authoritative form

and much effort had been expended on the formation of a doctrine of plenary verbal inspiration as attaching to that particular text.

Tischendorf, with all of his great contribution in the discovery and collation of a mass of manuscripts, had added to the confusion by varying the principles upon which his successive editions of the New Testament text were constructed, according to where his chief interest lay at the moment. First, it was the ancients that were to receive the greatest weight, then the moderns, and finally one ancient, the Codex Sinaiticus he himself had discovered.

Especially to one whose critical view developed according to the principles he believed to be basic, it was

> "impossible to vindicate such unsteadiness of purpose in a matter of so great importance as the text of the New Testament; and equally impossible not to feel that Codex ℵ, however valuable, is after all only one of our authorities. It may have been natural in Tischendorf to over-estimate it, but that consideration cannot justify the use to which it has been put.[1] We do not want a text needing to be thus apologised for."

Milligan's analysis of Tischendorf's difficulty follows:

> "The truth is, that what the great German critic failed in, was want of settled principles of criticism, and that he went at one time in one direction, at another in another, was owing to this, that he gave at all times too much play to the subjective impressions of the moment, and that he was too little disposed to yield to diplomatic evidence[2] when it would have led him to conclusions which he disliked."

Milligan made it clear that it was at least as early as 1849, just three years after his return from Germany, that he had become assured of the proper principles of textual criticism through an

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1. Milligan, The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, p. 141.
2. Ibid. p. 141.

article by Tregelles in the now familiar Journal of Sacred Literature, from which he quoted:

> "'We should seek for the true text in the most ancient MSS., using the collateral aid of versions and early citations, and we should subject all modifying rules to the claims of absolute evidence. We should restrict the application of such modifying rules to passages in which the real conflict of evidence is great. We should also consider that in many cases we could do no more than state the balance of probabilities; so that, besides the reading given in the text, other readings should be mentioned as possessing a strong claim to attention'."[1]

Milligan, then saw Tregelles as differing

> "from Tischendorf in submitting himself much more thoroughly to the guidance of evidence, and giving much less play to those prepossessions of his own by which that critic so often allowed himself to be swayed. Finally, he himself most wisely departed from the example of Tischendorf, by putting into the margin readings whose claims he thought almost equal to the claims of those adopted by him into the text. On the other hand, while in all this approaching much more nearly to Lachmann than to Tischendorf, Tregelles also differed from the former in aiming at the restoration of the text to that originally written by the sacred penmen, and in leaving, so far as he could, no room for that process of subsequently amending a merely provisional text, which Lachmann considered necessary to the completion of his work."[2]

Milligan knew that if the autographs were extant, the oldest texts would be contained in the oldest manuscripts; but since the oldest available manuscripts are copies and many years removed from the date of the composition of the originals, then the oldest available manuscripts may not contain the oldest available text. He could therefore say in reference to Tregelles and his school that:

> "They follow the whole evidence of the case; and, strange as the statement may seem to those who depreciate their labours, it is yet no more than the simple truth to say, that in their eyes the readings of ℵ and B are less commended by the fact that they exist in the two MSS., than the two MSS. are commended

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1. Ibid. pp. 142, 143.
2. Ibid. p. 143.

> by the fact that they contain the readings...after examination of evidence from every source, they proved themselves worthy of this high confidence. What can our editors do but award to them a degree of trust which they do not award to others? The trust is not blind or prejudiced. What is Codex B to Dr. Tregelles any more than Dr. Tregelles is to Codex B? It is because he has proved it that he appeals to it, proved it not by age alone, but by internal worth; and to say to him, therefore, you are putting an unreasoning confidence in the MSS., is to shut the eyes on that wide induction of facts by which its title to confidence has been established. It is not otherwise with the internal evidence to which our 'modern editors' appeal, the only fact to be noted here being that they appeal to internal evidence, not to arbitrary taste or preconceived ideas as to what the Word of God ought to contain. And if, in this part of their labours, they, with the exception to too large an extent of Tischendorf, are suspicious of themselves, and think it safer to be guided by facts, over against their own presuppositions, who shall blame them? To be so guided is the path at once of humility and wisdom, and it leads constantly to the most delightful and edifying lesson upon which the Christian can dwell, that 'the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men'."[1]

3. The Power of Prepossessions and the Objectivity of Evidence

The study of this controversy over the way in which the text is to be constructed must have further enlightened Milligan as to the desire of men to control the objective evidence by their own prepossessions. Tregelles had been accused of not having consideration for the spirituality of Scripture, of destroying reverence for it, and of disregarding the other school's instinct for the right reading. But Milligan recognised with Tregelles that 'spirituality' and 'reverence' and 'instinct' were being used to fix and to justify that which was not strictly conformed to the available evidence.

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1. Ibid. p. 148.

> "The spirituality of the Scriptures is a most important element of the problem; but the whole question depends on the meaning of the phrase.
>
> We must know in large measure what the Scriptures are before we can understand their spirituality; and, although no doubt this spirituality may be gathered from them while their text is far from perfect, and may then be justly brought to bear upon the process of perfecting it, it is surely clear that, so gathered, it rests ultimately upon evidence, and is liable, therefore, to be corrected by evidence."[1]

We cannot but discern here that even with his strong belief in the spiritual as over against a mechanical handling of evidence Milligan knew that evidence in itself must be accorded its rightful place. Not questioning the sincerity of the opponents of Tregelles and his school, he nevertheless wrote:

> "But a little reflection can hardly fail to show them that what they urge really means, that the readings in question are inconsistent with their notions of reverence, which notions must in the last resort fall back on evidence; and if so, they will hardly be able to deny that the evidence upon which their reverence rests may be confirmed or rebutted by other evidence upon which, in the case of others, there rests a reverence deepened by the very readings which they condemn, and weakened by those which they commend. The question, in short, runs up into the more remote one long ago so admirably set at rest by Bishop Butler: whether we are to accept revelation as God has given it; or first to determine what it ought to be, and then to reject whatever does not square with our expectations. That question cannot be reopened, and our 'modern editors' must go free."[2]

Milligan had come to see that one had to be careful about instincts (and perhaps intuitions, too?):

> "...these instincts, most valuable as they are in their true place, are in constant danger of passing into the particular notions of the critic by whom they are employed, and of becoming the exponent of narrow views, early prepossessions, fanciful opinions, or unfounded alarms."[3]

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1. Ibid. p. 149.
2. Ibid. p. 149.
3. Ibid. p. 150.

Milligan recognised that men can be unaware of their tendency to allow their prepossessions to dominate the objective evidence:

> "Unconsciously it may be, but not the less really they [the 'deeper and infallible instincts'] dominate the existing evidence wherever it is not at once clear and decisive. Nor is it less obvious that they are in a high degree vague and unworthy of being relied on. We are left at the mercy of the critic's own subjective convictions, or tastes, or whims; and there is very great danger that, if we trust ourselves to the guidance of his 'instincts', we shall find them as may always be expected of instincts not conformed to facts, running riot with everything that the Church ought to count more valuable."[1]

However much Milligan's study of the attempt to recover the original text of Scripture might have affected or altered his own preconceptions, the fact is that we do not find in any of his works, following the St. Andrews essays, any specific mention of "intuition" either in conjunction with an inspection of the mind or as attached specifically to the principle of causality as an "intuitive" principle of the mind; for that matter the principle of causality itself is no longer mentioned. Rather it would seem that the "life-and-leaven" emphasis in the theology of Tholuck and Neander -- along with a greater willingness to allow the evidence itself to call forth the principles -- had taken the place of his early strict adherence to an "intuitive" principle of causality as the basis of all theology. Evidence thereby became more integral to theology and its content. The shift simply indicates that Milligan was willing now to see that the truth of Christianity could not be logically demonstrated; the "answer in the breast" was the "chiefest evidence", and only life could demonstrate life. Nevertheless, the documentary evidence was to be given its full due as a guide to and

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1. Ibid. p. 151.

confirmation of the Truth and Life to which it testified; and, whatever that Truth and Life be, it must not contradict the evidence of the genuine text.

E. The Science of Biblical Criticism

The way in which William Milligan taught the subject of Biblical Criticism at the University of Aberdeen, is set forth in a book with the title, The Words of the New Testament, as Altered by Transmission and Ascertained by Modern Criticism, for Popular Use, written in collaboration with Alexander Roberts of St. Andrews. The first part, "The Facts of the Case", was written by Roberts. It is in the second part, "Mode of Dealing with the Facts", that we have Milligan's presentation of Biblical criticism as a science.

It is important to be aware of the fact that the very method of Biblical criticism, informed and enlivened by the power of the Spirit, almost inevitably leads to that central, objective, evidential fact of the resurrection. This does not mean, of course, that Milligan did not know where the evidence would lead him; it serves only to point out that the resurrection is the central revelatory fact simply because, as the circle of evidence gradually narrows, there is an ever closer approach to that fact until by its power and through its grace the investigator confronts not only a fact but the risen Lord. It is just in this centripetal movement that we will want to accompany Milligan and see what he saw.

1. The Court of Justice and the Narrowing of the Circle

William Milligan likens the task of the textual critic to that of a judge in a court of justice, confronted by various witnesses and guided by the laws of evidence. As we watch the procedure drawing closer and closer to the primary documentary witnesses -- i.e. to the autographs -- we will be able to discern how the same process leads to the true Witness.

> "We shall endeavour so to look at the task we have in hand as gradually to draw a line with ever-increasing closeness around the correct readings of which we are in search.
>
> Had we reason to believe that all these authorities were of equal value our course would be a simple one. Looking at them as so many witnesses, each entitled to the same degree of credit, one should simply reckon up the number upon opposing sides of the point at issue, and pronounce our verdict according to the numerical majority. Such a state of things, however, is never exhibited in a court of justice. The value of evidence there given by different witnesses very materially differs. Some have better opportunities of observation than others. Some have made a better use of opportunities in themselves equally good. One is better able than another to give his evidence in a clear, distinct, and intelligible manner. The statements made by one accord better than those made by others with circumstances already known to us. All these things affect the value of evidence. It is the duty of a judge to attend to them, and he may often have to decide the case before him to the evidence of the few instead of the many. Hence the legal maxim, than which there is nothing more thoroughly established, that testimony is to be weighed, not numbered."[1]

Milligan simply applied this legal maxim to the search for the authentic texts under the right guidance:

> "The example may suffice to show how much a decision in favour of a minority of witnesses may afterwards commend itself to the spiritually guided judgment [my emphasis]"[2]

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1. W. Milligan and A. Roberts, The Words of the New Testament, as Altered by Transmission and Ascertained by Modern Criticism for Popular Use, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1873, p. 84. See Appendix, Note VIII, for background on Evidence and Laws of Evidence.

2. Ibid. p. 88.

In first one step and then another Milligan proceeds with the sifting out of the few more trustworthy texts from the mass of other texts, never, however, omitting the possible usefulness of the witness for any reading.

The citations are shown to be less trustworthy as a whole. "Our circle is narrower than it was" [my emphasis].[1]

The same verdict must be given in regard to the versions. "Our circle again has been narrowed" [my emphasis].[2]

> "We are thus for first authorities thrown back upon manuscripts of the Greek text itself, upon documents professing to give us directly that text as it stood in the infancy of the Christian Church."[3]

While we should be aware that among copies the act of writing and the substance of what is written may belong to different times, nevertheless, the general character of the uncials may be used as a standard by which to judge the age of the texts of all the Greek manuscripts.

> "Thus then we have taken another step, and one most fruitful of results. It is a demonstrated fact that the great mass of manuscripts belonging to the later centuries of the Christian Church cannot stand the tests of which we have been speaking. We shall not say that they are therefore to be put wholly aside, but certainly they are not primary authorities. Our circle has again been greatly narrowed" [my emphasis].[4]

Milligan then made the significant remark that the early Fathers found "themselves largely compelled to pursue the same course of

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1. Ibid. p. 92.
2. Ibid. p. 94
3. Ibid. p. 95.
4. Ibid. p. 100.

arguments pursued by Biblical critics at the present day".[1]

Finally, the even earlier citations and versions -- as well as the internal evidence of the context, style and analogy of Scripture -- enable the judge to give a reasonable verdict as to the most authentic texts among the ancients.

Again Milligan refers to the courtroom analogy:

> "Proved veracity in a witness upon many points is a reason why we should not only believe him upon these points, but why we should accept him as a generally credible witness. Let us refuse to acknowledge this and a fundamental law of evidence is overthrown."[2]

Again the critics are compared to judges:

> "They know what they are about. By long, laborious study they have been able to establish certain principles by which they can decide as to the character of the witnesses before them; and they are thus prepared for giving their verdict upon the whole case in the calm judicial spirit of a judge upon the bench."[3]

Not only is it important to recognise the role played by the judge guided by established rules of evidence in the determination of the truth of the case; it is equally important, in following the development of Milligan's theology, to understand that <u>all</u> evidence has <u>some</u> value. Nevertheless, the <u>standard</u> of the value of all the evidence is located in that evidence which is found to have the greatest weight or significance; and this standard is found through the gradual narrowing of the circle by the inductive method of exclusion.

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1. Milligan and Roberts, <u>The Words of the New Testament</u>, p. 103. The Tübingen School questioned this belief.
2. Ibid. pp. 107, 108.
3. Ibid. pp. 114, 115.

> "The effect...of the procedure now advocated upon the mass of our materials for judging of the true text of the New Testament will be at once apparent...Both ancients and moderns together, able to vindicate their right to occupy the highest place in the list of tested manuscripts, are but few in number. Our circle of primary authorities has been still more narrowed."[1] [my emphasis]

2. The Rediscovery of the Humanity of Scripture

What do we see happening here? Human judgment, guided by the Spirit and the rules of evidence, is given its due in the process of approximating to the original texts. That which had been looked upon as above criticism had been hypostatised by the faulty standards of spirituality and reverence and fixed by -- among other things -- the unanalysed effects of a print culture. The important point was not so much that criticism would materially alter only a small portion of the Received Text, but that men were called upon to acknowledge the human element if not yet in the original composition of the Word of God then certainly in its transmission. The very existence of the various readings compelled men to use their own human judgment in the search for the genuine readings:

> "We are entitled to say that the credibility of all our witnesses must be tried by tests which every judge applies. If they stand the test they must be listened to, but escape it they cannot."[2]

When the Scriptures were regarded as mechanical transcripts, if not typescripts, of segments of thought in the mind of God, they were thereby detached from their incarnational reference -- i.e. they were stripped of their dated locale. In this way the Word of

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1. Ibid. p. 115.
2. Ibid. pp. 119, 120.

God was conceived as consisting of so many propositions, which, freed from the personal and the historical, became amenable not only to systematisation but also to logical demonstration. Much in the same way that the Pharisees abstracted God's Law from God, so the latter day defenders of tradition had abstracted the Authorised Version from the Textus Receptus and the Textus Receptus from the rest of the evidence provided by the other readings. Indeed, it was not impossible to believe that the English of the Authorised Version just might be closer to the eternal ideas than the Greek or Hebrew texts. Had not the Latin Church previously viewed the Vulgate as placed between the two thieves of the Greek and Hebrew texts?

But the science of textual criticism, by its submission to the evidence, was, as we shall see, to reinstate the spatial as well as the temporal dialectic. Thus a comparison of texts having taken place in relation to time only -- i.e. whether early or late in reference to one another as well as in relation to the autographs -- there now enters the importance of the relation to places as an indication of the vitality and power mediated through the texts:

> "We turn, then, again to the differences of readings that we have before us about the beginning of the fourth century, and we are met by the fact that groups of these differences appear to have been prevalent in some parts of the Christian world more than others.
>
> ... given two contending readings of a text, the one having the best claim on our acceptance will be the one which has maintained its place in the greatest number of districts, notwithstanding the tendency of these districts to introduce changes of their own. Its permanence amidst so much around it that was shifting shows its vitality and power; and even if it

> has not been accepted everywhere, the more widespread the diffusion, in other words, the greater the permanence, the greater the power."[1]

Two important conclusions can be drawn from the fact of the general distribution of texts according to geographical districts. In the first place, the number of readings having the same locale is not of primary importance in the construction of the text, for they simply testify to the one common ancestor. But, in the second place, the number of localities to which one reading has been traced is a witness to the power and vitality of the text.

> "The wide diffusion of the ancient readings is established; that diffusion was owing to its vitality; and the vitality is best explained by the supposition of originality and truth."[2]

Finally, when the external evidence for the genuineness of two readings is nearly equal, then principles of internal evidence must be called upon; and this, too, is just the procedure followed in a court of justice:

> "It is so in that ordinary administration of law, the processes of which...afford the best analogy to the course which the Biblical critic has to pursue."[3]

In the way that William Milligan described the proper function of a judge in face of the evidence we are afforded an enlightening insight into his own development and procedure, not only as a Biblical critic and interpreter but also as a theologian. Let us note especially his references to the mind's seeing and hearing and to the function of an hypothesis in relation to the phenomena to be explained.

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1. Milligan and Roberts, The Words of the New Testament, pp. 122, 123.
2. Ibid. p. 134.
3. Ibid. p. 139.

> "A judge can rarely, if ever, settle a dispute between two parties by external evidence alone. It is the mind that sees, and not the eye. It is the mind that hears and not the ear; and according to the light in which different assertions present themselves to the judge's mind will be the judgment that he forms. The probabilities of the case, and the internal coherence of the narrative, must always influence his decision; and his verdict is to be viewed as the hypothesis that takes up and explains all the phenomena connected with the dispute. It is true that this necessity of reasoning on probabilities may often degenerate into mere subjectivity or wilfulness, and that a judge may carry out some theory of his own in such a manner as to set at nought well-established facts; but therein lies the highest trial of the judge's skill. Therein judicial tact, ability, genius prove their infinite superiority to mere mechanical administration. For ten men who can learn rules, and apply them with accuracy to a case before them, we may be thankful to find one who, not acting apart from rule, can yet stand superior to rule and can mould, in the fire of his own genius, both the external facts and the internal probabilities into one harmonious whole. It is the same in the criticism of the text of Scripture. External evidence is not only valuable; it forms the very ground of our proceedings; it sets before us the facts of which we are to judge. But then we must judge. The danger to which we are exposed of giving way to prepossessions, to subjective feelings, must be met; and in the establishing of sound general principles, in the cultivation of a sound mind, lies the critic's power. This much at least is certain, that no editor of the Greek text of the New Testament ...[with one qualification]...has attempted to construct his text upon grounds of external authority alone. Over and above such grounds, the resort to internal evidence has been always found to be necessary."[1]

The guiding principles of internal evidence in the determination of the text, according to Milligan, are those which point to the readings that seem to have suggested the others, those that are more difficult than the others, and those which are more in accord with the style and thought of the "sacred penman".

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1. Ibid. pp. 139, 140.

3. The Word of God and the Risen Lord

Such a procedure, Milligan averred, referring to the practice of the whole science of textual criticism, "will leave no doubt upon our minds that we have the very words before us in which the Almighty revealed His will to man."[1]

This last quotation enables the reader to discern that William Milligan's use of the critical method did not alter his great respect for the true Word of God. As we shall come to see even more clearly, it appears that with all his organic conception of the inspiration of Scripture and the growth of theology Milligan believed a vital relationship to exist between the true words of Scripture and the eternal ideas in the mind of God. And in this view he perhaps saw himself as in agreement with Tregelles:

> "It is one, indeed, of the most memorable circumstances connected with Tregelles, that, retaining to the last the most profound reverence for Scripture, and even a firm belief in its verbal inspiration, he yet devoted himself with the most resolute and consistent faithfulness to determine its original text."[2]

Having demonstrated how the application of the rules of evidence to the various readings enables the critic to construct the autographs, it is only to be expected that William Milligan would show how, by an application of these same rules of evidence to the facts (or events) to which the text itself testifies, one is enabled to detect that central fact (or event) which by its power and vitality stands forth as the explanation of the whole series of facts (or

1. Ibid. p. 147.
2. W. Milligan, "Tischendorf and Tregelles as Editors of the Greek New Testament", The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, XXV, 1876, pp. 128, 129.

events) that cluster about it. Such a procedure was only the result of allowing the process of narrowing the circle of witnesses to continue to the end, until the fact of the risen Lord is seen not only as the primary witness to the truth of the other facts and words but as its own self-witness.

It is true, of course, that just as Milligan believed beforehand that the genuine text is the Word of God, so did he believe beforehand that the central fact within the external evidences of the Scriptures is the resurrection. Put in another way: Textual criticism arrives at the autographs by a strict adherence to evidence and its rules. This same evidential procedure leads to the fact of the resurrection. As the genuine Word of God by its vitality and power leads the honest critic to the autographs, so does the risen Lord, by His Spirit, lead the seeker through the Biblical evidence to Himself. In truth, the Word of God and the risen Lord are one and the same, a fact which testifies to His humanity as well as to His divinity, and the full realisation of which was to effect the full development of William Milligan's theology. In the context of our present consideration such a maturing of Milligan's theology was quite simply the end result of his being true to the evidence while remaining open to the Spirit.

From 1864 to 1966 Milligan wrote twenty-two articles for The Imperial Bible-Dictionary; among them is one on the "Resurrection of Christ", which opens as follows:

> "It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of the resurrection of our Lord, either in itself or in its bearing on the Christian life, nor is it too much to say, that a firm conviction of the truth of this one event would dispel almost

> every difficulty connected with the supernatural origin of our faith, afford conclusive testimony to the claims of the New Testament revelation, and impart to all the followers of Jesus a far larger amount of Christian privilege and a far loftier standard of Christian living, than is commonly exhibited by them. We cannot read either the Gospels or epistles without seeing how influential was a part which a belief of the resurrection of its Lord played in the views and feelings of the infant church. We cannot think of it seriously now without being satisfied that whatever it was to that church it may be to us; and would one wish to settle with himself what will do him most good amidst the perplexities and doubts and questionings of a time such as that in which we live, he would probably, after reviewing all the facts of Christianity, turn to this as the one, a firm faith in which will be the most suitable to his purpose that Christ Jesus, having really died and been buried, rose on the third day from the grave."[1]

We are now at the threshold of the most significant contribution of the mature theology of William Milligan. This subject will be pursued in the remaining chapters.

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1. W. Milligan, "Resurrection of Christ", The Imperial Bible-Dictionary, ed. P. Fairbairn, II, 1866, p. 763. Milligan's other articles in this dictionary, all in Vol. II, are Lazarus, Mark (Evangelist and Gospel), Martha, Mary, Mary the Virgin, Mary Magdalene, Mary of Cleopas, Mary of Bethany, Mary of Acts 12.12, Mary of Rom. 16.6, Matthew (Evangelist and Gospel), Parable, Pharisees, Publican, Sadducees, Scribes, Synagogue, Traconitis.

CHAPTER V

THE FACT

In this chapter we will attempt to follow William Milligan's approach to the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the narrowing of the circle of evidence, we are conducted straight to this central fact until, by the Spirit, all the evidence is seen in the light of the risen Lord. We also will consider how Milligan viewed the fact of the ascension as being contained within the resurrection.

It is recognized by all who think seriously about Christianity that the subject of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is all-important. As was true during William Milligan's time, so today, evidence plays a basic role in a right discernment of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The differences appear in the judgment of that evidence.

William Milligan was convinced of the primacy of the spiritual, but he knew that he had to be true to the evidence. And the way he handled the Scriptural evidence in relation to the fact of the resurrection of our Lord helped to determine the final development of his theology. Such can be said of all theologies drawn from the New Testament; indeed, this holds true -- even especially so -- in regard to the theologies within the New Testament.

Milligan was very much aware of the difficulty inherent in writing about the resurrection of Jesus Christ; but it was the supreme importance of the subject that constrained him to make the attempt, for he was certain that its full meaning and power had been neglected:

> "The field of thought embraced by the Resurrection of our Lord, in the light in which it is here presented, demands greater attention at the hands of our Scottish theologians than it has hitherto received."[1]

Milligan came to see that the difficulty belonging to the great subject was dictated by the fact itself, driven home by the disclosure that thinking and writing about the fact ever occur in the presence of the risen Lord Himself. The attempt to be true to the evidence, to be "objective" in this sense, must ever be conducted as over against the risen, present Lord, who thereby makes us aware of His own "principle of indeterminacy".

Was not Kierkegaard expressing this very difficulty when he wrote:

> "...it is the most precious comedy that ever could have been written in the world: to let modern exegesis and dogmatics go through their curriculum in the situation of contemporaneousness."[2]

And it is just this awareness of the presence of the Lord that makes the attempt to write on His resurrection truly a cause for prayer:

> "May the Risen Lord bless to the edifying of His Church the effort now made to set forth the glory of His Resurrection and of His Resurrection-state."[3]

Milligan was conscious that reading or hearing about the resurrection of Christ, as well as writing or speaking about it, take place in the presence of the risen Lord Himself:

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1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905 (first published in 1881), pp. vii, viii.
2. S. Kierkegaard, Authority and Revelation, trans W. Lowrie, Princeton University Press, 1955, p. 64.
3. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905, p. viii.

> "Let the Risen Christ be clearly before the mind of the Church, and human lips will not be able to speak a lesson as telling as the simple statement of the fact."[1]

It was Milligan's desire to lead his hearers and readers to this vision of the Risen-Crucified Lord, for he himself without doubt had been captivated by it.

A. Narrowing the Circle of Evidence

1. First the Fact, then its Interpretation

Milligan was only being true to the principles established in the science of textual criticism when he decided to set forth the historical evidence for the resurrection of Christ before dealing with its interpretation:

> "The Evidence hitherto adduced has been exclusively historical, and it was necessary that it should be so. Other evidence connected with the meaning of the fact with which we deal will meet us as we proceed. But it is in the fact first, in the idea afterwards, that the vast importance of the Resurrection of our Lord is to be found. Before we can be influenced by it we must be convinced by distinct historical evidence that it actually took place."[2]

Nothing had made Milligan more aware of man's tendency to subject external evidence to his own prejudices and prepossessions than the study of the science of textual criticism. Man's subjectivity is ever attempting -- usually by giving "reasons" -- to gain the ascendancy over the objective, external, historical evidence. But Milligan had learned just as certainly that the external evidence must be given the greater weight over even the most customary, or

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1. Ibid. p. xiv.
2. Ibid. pp. 73, 74.

revered, or hoped for, reading -- unless that reading can marshall witnesses with just as much weight of external evidence. Yet to say that man's nature requires such a reading or that the Resurrection is the fulfilment of all religions, however true and important these reasons may be, is not adequate for its establishment without sufficient historical evidence. Surely the reinstatement of this requirement of evidence was the chief blessing of the Baconian philosophy. To dismiss this rediscovery with the accusation that the Baconian distinction between fact and interpretion is simplistic is altogether to miss the point. It is true that modern natural science has dissolved many "facts" and disposed of theories that had come to be viewed as universal laws; we need only think of "relativity", atomic fission, and quantum mechanics. It is true that thinking in pictures -- as though there were a one-to-one relationship between the picture and the reality -- has proven hazardous. It is also true that the human, personal factor ever must remain an integral part of all knowledge.[1] However, we still look not only for coherence and economy and beauty, but also, and especially, for evidence -- whether it be black marks on a scroll or an electric signal. We must not ignore or distort evidence in order to hold a favourite theory; and, once all the available evidence is given its due weight, the theory or interpretation must be such that it accounts for all the evidence. The interpretation, in order to stand, must have an invariance under all known transformations. Is

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1. See M. Polanyi, Personal Knowledge, Aberdeen Gifford Lectures, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958.

not this the truly scientific approach? Is it not simply a refinement of the Baconian insight? And is not the Baconian insight a "spin-off" from the Reformation rediscovery of the objectivity of the Word?[1] And cannot the Reformation insight be traced to those who testified to what they had seen and heard and touched -- concerning the Word of life -- and, through them, to the Spirit Himself giving testimony to the incarnate Word? Thus the rationality of the Word and the testimony of the Spirit militate against two temptations accompanying the hermeneutic function: to regard the evidence either as an objectification projected by the individual ego or as merely historical. The resolution of the subject-object "dilemma" is not effected by the dissolving of the one side into the other, but by coming to see in the incarnate Word the right relationship between the two sides. And the path to this resolution leads through the historical evidence of the resurrection. To the extent that we ignore or distort this evidence we tend to deny the foundation of our own existence. Such was Milligan's belief.

> "But unless the Resurrection of our Lord be first established as a historical fact, its value even for these purposes is destroyed...It becomes a speculation..The thought of the allegiance which we owe to the demands of our own nature does not affect us so powerfully as the thought of the allegiance which we owe to an external fact. [my emphasis]. Not that these demands are less important, but the difficulty often is to be so certain that what they are as to feel that we are without excuse in resisting them. It is otherwise with an external fact. If we refuse to bow to it when sufficiently vouched for we overturn the very foundation upon which our existence rests. [my emphasis] Therefore it is that the

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1. See T.F. Torrance,"The Influence of Reformed Theology on the Development of Scientific Method", Theology in Reconstruction, SCM Press, London, 1965, pp. 62-75.

> historical evidence of the Resurrection of our Lord must hold the first place in our regard; and it is because of my deliberate conviction that it ought to do so, that I have placed it first."[1]

It might yet be said that Milligan's distinction between fact and idea was too facile, for we know what a large part interpretation plays in the judgment regarding any so-called fact;[2] yet the true rationality of theology depends upon just this distinction between the genuinely objective -- even if it be called 'secondary objectivity' -- and what is imposed by the subject. If we follow Milligan's presentation, we come to recognise that the real theological object can be known only <u>through</u> the evidential and not around it or over it or in spite of it. Then it is that the meaning of the fact is discerned, not only in its relationship to other facts but also by its losing its opacity in the light of the person of the risen Lord.

2. <u>The Importance of Meeting Man's Need of Evidence</u>

In setting forth the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, William Milligan was careful to show that its establishment involves a meticulous consideration of the evidence. The same rules of evidence which guide the textual critic are equally relevant when the shift is made from the Biblical documents themselves to that to which the documents testify. Man's critical faculty is still that by which the evidence is judged. Just as the greater weight of a text determines it as a standard over against other readings, and

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1. Milligan, <u>The Resurrection of Our Lord</u>, pp. 74, 75.
2. A. Richardson, <u>History, Sacred and Profane</u>, S.C.M. Press, London, 1964, pp. 190-194. See also the last chapter of this thesis.

accounts for them; so there is discovered to be an event of such weight that it accounts for the other events that cluster about it.

Milligan's high regard for evidence and his willingness to appeal to it mark all his writings; and he saw these things reflected in Scripture itself, to which he always endeavoured to be loyal. He believed that God Himself respects man's need of evidence; indeed this requirement was for Milligan a built-in characteristic of man.

> "In none of his ways, either in creation or providence, is it the purpose of the Almighty to force us to a legitimate conclusion. He appeals to us as reasonable beings, able to judge and free to form the judgment that seems best. Such a method of dealing is adapted to the nature that we possess. Were we otherwise dealt with, we should be dealt with, not as men, but as creatures altogether different from what we are. It is the same when the great facts and truths of religion are set before us. We appropriate them in the exercise of the same principles, as those which guide us in common life. Were it otherwise, we should need one nature for religious, another for ordinary truth; the one basis of our nature would be destroyed."[1]

To belittle the need for evidence by quoting our Lord's refusal to give a sign is to misread the Scriptures. Surely the teaching is not that man can do without evidence but that enough evidence for a rational belief in the Lord is available and to demand more than what is adequate is a sign of unbelief. The sign of Jonah points forward to Christ's death and resurrection. Christ's resurrection is more than a sign, but it <u>is</u> a sign of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life. Man interprets by signs; and these signs are gathered up in the incarnate Lord, to whom they testify. The Scriptural evidence has for its reference the Lord Himself. Signs

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1. W. Milligan, "Why did Jesus, after His Resurrection, appear only to His Disciples?" <u>The Sunday Magazine</u>, 1869, p. 610.

find their adequacy in the incarnate Word. Signs will remain inadequate and opaque as long as it is believed that they must refer ultimately to something other than the Lord, whether it be to the Law or to self-understanding. Then it is that Pharaisaism, or the programme of demythologisation, is revealed as a protest by man's egocentricity against the evidence that remains recalcitrant to being viewed with self in the centre.[1]

Milligan also believed that just as God was willing to give evidence, so the disciples consciously offered evidence to satisfy the natural requirements of their hearers:

> "The disciples of Jesus knew that they were giving it [evidence]. It was distinctly felt in the early church that the great fact before us was a fact which needed to be proved. The language of Paul in I Cor. xv 4-8, when he relates not what he merely said then, but what he had been long accustomed to say, is decisive upon this point. It was with the knowledge that they were giving proof, and that they were liable therefore to hostile examination of their statements, that the first preachers of the gospel spoke. It was in the arena of public discussion and debate, not to willing ears alone, that they proclaimed a risen Saviour."[2]

It is a mistake to think that the early Christians did not require evidence before committing themselves, whereas today that evidence is required. Surely the earnest inquirer of any age seeks evidence, at least confirmatory of the news, on which he is asked to risk his life. Milligan believed that there was much more questioning than we are told of in the New Testament, the bulk of which was written to believers. In the acts of the Apostles he

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1. See T.F. Torrance,"Justification, Its Radical Nature and Place in Reformed Doctrine and Life", and "A New Reformation", Theology in Reconstruction, op.cit., pp. 150-168, 259-283.

2. Milligan, "Why did Jesus, after His Resurrection, appear only to His Disciples?" The Sunday Magazine, 1869, p. 610.

found allusions to such times of examination and cross-examination. With Milligan there was little doubt that the actuality of the resurrection of Christ was a main topic of discussion and examination, due to its uniqueness. The early Church must have had what we must assume she did have, reasons for the faith she held.[1]

Has there not been in the teaching centres of the Church generally an over-reaction to the latter-day misguided attempt to give a logical demonstration, based on evidence, of the truth of Christianity? An abstraction from the Spirit of testimony was the inevitable concomitant of such an attempt. But as we learn to give heed to the demonstration of the Spirit are we not led back to a new appreciation of the place of evidence in that demonstration?

3. The Evidence

Milligan believed that the amount of evidence required to establish even such an event as the resurrection of Christ is available in Scripture. The quality of the evidence must be distinguished from its quantity by its various characteristics: the variety of circumstances, the circumstantiality of the testimony, the simplicity and apparent truthfulness of witnesses' descriptions, the unexpectedness of the event, the frame of mind of the disciples after the event, the publishing of the testimony to the world on the very spot where, and at the very moment when, the event was said to have happened.[2]

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1. See Milligan, The Resurrection of our Lord, op.cit., pp. 65, 66.
2. W. Milligan, "Resurrection of Christ", The Imperial Bible-Dictionary, ed. P. Fairbairn, II, Blackie and Son, London, 1866, p. 764.

Great stress was placed by Milligan on the effect of what the Apostles had seen. It is needful to notice more than Paul's assertion that he saw the risen Lord, for the effect of what he saw makes one even more aware of the centrality of the risen Lord in the life of that Apostle. It is true that the obviousness of the effect does not prove that the object of Paul's faith was well-grounded; but it does prove that Paul himself was convinced that what he saw was not a dream but a reality. His life was radically changed. The risen Lord became the key to Paul's labours and to his theology. His whole life-style was formed in accord with this conviction. It accounts for his zeal, for his willingness to depart and be with the Lord, and for the joy that accompanied his sufferings on behalf of the Lord. It led him to welcome a martyr's death as a king anticipates a coronation.[1]

Just as in our day there are those -- such as Bultmann -- who attempt to make Christ's death on the cross the only true central historical event, the contemplation of which somehow brought about the realisation, on the part of the disciples, of Christ's victory, such was also the position of many in Milligan's day. Baur, "the great leader of the negative school on the Continent," had told how it was the death of Jesus that had impressed him most of all and had become the centre of his theological system.[2] Milligan knew that there were many who shared the same view, and he believed that this view was incorrect. But he knew that with Paul it was the risen

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1. See Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, p. 41.
2. Ibid. p. 42.

Christ who revealed the meaning of His death as a sacrifice for sin. Christ Himself, the Person of the risen Son of God, was the central focus of Pauline theology. With Baur and the others Christ's death had been abstracted from His living person.[1] Baur's dialectical presuppositions controlled his theology and precluded his coming to see Christ in His risen humanity in the centre. Is this view in essence really any different from the view of Bultmann, who himself appears to be controlled by a positivist conception of a closed universal system and the Heideggerian presuppositions? Does his "prior understanding" really leave any room for the testimony of the Holy Spirit to the risen Christ and to the Father through Him?

Even the apostolic office itself was closely connected with the appearances of the Risen Lord. Having seen the risen Lord was to the Apostles not simply a matter of special privilege; their very office was a function of having witnessed the risen Christ. Here was the ultimate empirical level of that office. This explains why testimony to a unique revelation is the authentic grounding of the Church's proclamation and teaching. This eye-witness of the risen Lord is not merely one in a series of experiences which moulded the Apostolic witness; it is <u>the</u> focal point and interpretative centre for all of theology. It is the inspiration of all Apostolic work and suffering. The more intense the work or the suffering, the more certain it is that the risen Christ, who had gone through death, was the Object of testimony.[2]

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1. Ibid. pp. 42, 43.
2. Ibid. pp. 47, 48.

According to Milligan, the belief in the resurrection of Christ is necessary to account for the origin of the Church; in fact, the Church was reconstructed on the basis of this belief. This is confirmed by the institution of the Lord's Day and of Easter Day, not to mention the testimony of the early liturgies and even the language of common life.[1]

4. The Importance of the Empty Tomb

Though recognising that the evidence of the empty tomb could be classed as negative evidence, Milligan did not neglect its importance. If the enemies of Christ had taken the body, they would have produced it. If the disciples had taken it, their claim would have rested upon fraud; but, if so, their motives would have been simply impossible to explain. That all the narratives mention the empty tomb first and the appearances afterwards is sufficient to dispel the idea that they are the legendary additions of a later time:

> "Nothing could better establish the fact that the grave was empty when it was first visited on the Resurrection morning; and, if it was, we must either take refuge, like Strauss, in the wholly untenable idea that Jesus was never buried there, or we must find in the fact a strong corroborative testimony of the truth of His Resurrection."[2]

It is precisely in dealing with the tomb that a segment of modern scholarship reveals not only its naiveté but its gnosticism. Perhaps it is the very "bodiliness" of the matter that offends and embarrasses those who hold to a way of knowledge that transcends the ability of the man in the street. Of course, an empty tomb does

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1. Ibid. passim, pp. 62-71.
2. Ibid. p. 73.

not prove resurrection. But who in the contemporary situation could possibly have believed in Christ's resurrection while viewing His dead body? Or who can be justified in holding that the relation between resurrection and empty tomb is a matter of indifference? Surely the emptiness of the tomb and the failure to produce the body corroborate the positive testimony of the eyewitnesses. Is it not the dodging or the ignoring of the empty tomb that most clearly reveals the unreality of the world in which some scholars have chosen to live.

B. Difficulties

1. Dealing with Attempts to Explain Away the Resurrection

Though Milligan knew how vain is an argument with those who on their own principles do not admit the possibility of resurrection, he nevertheless believed it to be necessary on the basis of the evidence to refute the theories put forward with the intention of explaining away the fact of the resurrection.

> "Various attempts have been made to explain away the resurrection of Jesus, and thus to escape the logical necessity of receiving what it had been resolved beforehand to reject."[1]

The method of falsification of theories purporting to explain away Christ's resurrection is simply the same as that which Milligan had employed in his early essay, on the Necessity of Revelation, wherein there was no attempt to prove truth on the basis of a priori principles but only a falsifying, on evident grounds, of the

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1. W. Milligan, "Resurrection of Christ", The Imperial Bible-Dictionary, II, Blackie and Son, London, 1866, p. 767.

deistic claim that revelation is redundant.

Milligan identified three basic theories set forth in opposition to the fact of the resurrection of our Lord: the "swoon" theory, the "fraud" theory, and the "vision" theory. The first two had shown themselves as destitute of any evidence and all internal probability.[1] The third, Milligan judged to be the most specious and formidable. But by a detailed examination of the theory in relation to the statements of Scripture he demonstrated its illegitimacy. The Vision theory is shown to be inconsistent with the mental state of the Disciples previous to the manifestations, inconsistent with the nature of the manifestations themselves, inconsistent with the state of the Christian community after the manifestations, and inconsistent with the length of time often occupied by them, with the fact of their having been witnessed by many persons simultaneously, with the scene of the chief manifestations, and with their sudden cessation.[2]

In relation to St. Paul the vision theory is shown to be inconsistent with his own language, his character and work, and the circumstances attending his conversion.[3]

It is true that most of what Milligan had to say about the external evidence for the fact of the resurrection of Christ was not new; yet the way in which he marshalled the evidence and so clearly stated various points may still serve as a welcome antidote

1. See Appendix, Note IX.
2. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905, pp. 81-114. See Table of Contents, p. xx.
3. Ibid. pp. 81-93.

to much present day vagueness concerning the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus. Ours seems to be a time when the significance of evidence is allowed and pressed in almost every area except that of Christianity. Just as in this day, so in the last century there were those who wished to reduce the evidence of events back into the evidence of mere words, and thence into the subjectivity of the believers:

> "He [Keim] removes the whole matter from the realm of science to that of faith. History, he believes, leaves nothing unquestionable but the conviction of the Apostles that their Lord had risen, together with the immense result of that conviction -- the Christianising of mankind. But faith does more. Moving within its own appropriate sphere, which is entirely different from that of science, and in which it is impossible for science to refute it, faith completes and illumines those limitations of knowledge to which science must submit."[1]

Milligan's charge against Keim, who tried to save Christian faith from having to submit to the pedestrian demands of evidence, has relevance to Keim's kin today:

> "The theory really admits the ultimate contents of the Church's faith, although it denies the validity of the course by which she reaches them."[2]

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1. Ibid. p. 114.

2. Ibid. p. 116. Elsewhere, Milligan states the same critique: "It is of the highest consequence not only to come to a right conclusion, but to come to it in a right way...There is great force in the remark of Archbishop Whately: 'It should be remembered that the differance between an accurate and an inaccurate statement of any doctrine, and of the grounds on which it rests, is of no slight importance, if not to those who embrace the doctrine, at least in reference to such as are disposed to reject or to doubt it. It is giving a manifest advantage to the advocates of error to maintain a true conclusion in such a form, and on such grounds, as leave it open to unanswerable objections'. "The Decalogue and the Lord's Day", Wm. Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1866, pp. 113, 114.

Such a variation on the vision theory -- although it holds that the vision is truly objective -- like the others opposing the fact of the (bodily) resurrection of Jesus

> "fails to satisfy the indispensable conditions of inquiry. It also, therefore, must be rejected, and we have no legitimate resource but to accept the fact."[1]

William Milligan, of course, had not confronted Bultmann's existential interpretation of the resurrection of Christ, nor had he met with the specific word 'objectification', in regard to the allegedly false turning of what was only an existential experience into an objective event in space and time. Yet Milligan had met with the same kind of positivist historiography that ruled out 'the miraculous'. If it be held that bodily resurrection from the dead is impossible, then in order to account for the Biblical narratives of such an event an objectification of a purely existential experience is posited. But this peculiarly subtle attempt to explain away the resurrection of Christ would have presented no insuperable difficulty to William Milligan, for he doubtless would have pointed out that the origin of the Church and of the disciples' faith cannot be accounted for by an "experience" that is not amenable to being grounded outside the self in an objective, historical event.[2]

Indeed, all theories denying the fact of the resurrection of Jesus by attempting to account otherwise for the Scriptural evidence come to grief in the same way, and the fact itself remains to be accepted -- i.e. the risen Lord continues the confrontation.

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1. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, p. 119.
2. A. Richardson, History, Sacred and Profane, S.C.M. Press, London, 1964, pp. 152, 208-210.

2. Alleged Defects in the Evidence

Other attempts to overthrow the fact of the resurrection involve the allegation of defects in the Scriptural evidence. One such allegation is to the effect that there was no eye-witness of the resurrection itself. Milligan's answer:

> "The whole question turns upon the fact that our witnesses recognised their Lord after He rose to be the same Lord whom they had known before He died. He had died, He had been buried, He was now beside them; and He could not have been so if He had not risen."[1]

Parenthetically, it is just here that Milligan sets forth the underlying axiom of his whole approach to the resurrection of Christ and to the risen Lord Himself: Jesus Christ is fundamentally the same before and after His resurrection - that is, He is the God-man, very God and very man, the hypostatic union of divinity and humanity, one Person. This doctrine Milligan never questioned. What he chose as the chief thesis of his book, The Resurrection of Our Lord, is the importance of a distinction within this basic identity: Christ's resurrection body differed and remains different from the body that was laid in the tomb -- though it was and is the same body.

To continue, even if someone actually had seen Him rise from the dead, the grounds for the recognition would have been no different from the grounds for His recognition following the resurrection.

Another allegation has been that the different witnesses are inconsistent with each other. Milligan's answer points in the direction of the event itself rather than merely to the words them-

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1. Ibid. p. 55.

selves, which, of course, testify to the event. His answer, as we have learned to expect, is by way of appeal to the same rules and principles employed by any competent judge:

> "It is such a principle that no two men, recording the same event, will record it in every particular in the same way, it is such a rule that these slight discrepancies in details, when combined with perfect agreement in the substance of the fact related, confirm rather than shake our belief in it. We apply the same principle and rule to the Evangelists and instead of attempting to strain grammatical expressions, or to force clauses beyond their natural and simple meaning, we find that, even were the differences greater than they are, they would only strengthen our conviction that we are dealing with honest and true witnesses, and that the great fact itself remains vouched for by them all."[1]

3. The Critical Question

There was one question, the answer to which helped to determine the final phase in the development of William Milligan's theology and to shape that theology into a theology of the risen Lord. It was a question that one who acknowledges the importance of external evidence very naturally would raise: Why did the risen Christ appear only to His disciples? Would it not have been of great assistance to the Christian cause if Jesus had shown Himself, after His resurrection, to people like Caiaphas and all the Sanhedrin and even to the world at large? If this had happened, would not the case for Christianity have been that much stronger? Would not the evidence have had much more weight added to it?

William Milligan saw the naturalness of the question and recognised that the answer to it involved the judgment that Christ's

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1. W. Milligan, "Resurrection of Christ", The Imperial Bible-Dictionary, Blackie and Son, London, 1866, p. 768.

resurrection was more than evidence; and such was the importance of the question that he devoted an entire article to its answer. Undoubtedly Milligan himself, with all his respect for evidence, had had to face the question and work out a satisfactory answer. At this point, however, it is well to ask a question of the questioner. Is it true that our Lord appeared only to His disciples? Milligan himself was aware of the one who might seem to have been an exception:

> "...we have no fewer than eleven different occasions upon which, after his resurrection, the Saviour manifested himself to his disciples (in one case indeed to one whom he was only at the moment calling to be a disciple), to those who knew him, to those who had been for upwards of three years his intimate companions and friends, to those from whom he had been at the utmost only a few days separated."[1]

Here perhaps Milligan was trying to be too neat. To say that Paul became a disciple at the moment Christ appeared to him was to use the word in a completely different way from the manner in which it is employed in the rest of the sentence. Though Paul himself knew, afterwards, that there had been a kind of preparation (Gal. 1.15), the attempt to place him within the category of 'disciple', by saying that he was called to be a disciple 'at the moment' Christ appeared to him, only makes it more manifest than ever that Paul was indeed an exception to the question. That Milligan was aware -- or at least became aware -- of the singularity of Paul's apostleship is indicated by the following:

> "...St. Paul had been called to the Apostleship in a manner different from that of the other members of the Apostolic band.

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1. Ibid. p. 764.

> He had not, like them, been first brought to faith by companionship with his Lord's earthly life. He had first believed in the risen and glorified Lord."[1]

If Christ appeared to one who not only had not been a disciple but had persecuted His followers, what was to have prevented His appearing to any other non-disciple and enemy? The right answer, it seems to the writer, is that we are not dealing in this matter with possibilities, but with actualities, not with what our Lord could and could not have done but with what He in fact did and did not do, according to the available evidence.

C. The Answer to the Critical Question

In approaching Milligan's answer to the question of Christ's non-appearance to the world we should keep in mind both the evidential and the Neander-Tholuck emphases. The former discipline, we will recall, had underlined very heavily the inferential and had employed the conscience in anchoring the evidential proof. The latter school had enabled Milligan to breathe more easily in the atmosphere of spirit and had thereby brought his earlier conception of conscience as constituting the moral element of man into a more vital relationship to the immediacy of the life of God in the soul. Both theological disciplines had given a high place to the resurrection of Christ. As we may recall, the Scottish school tended to view it as the chief external evidence for the truth of the doctrines of Christianity. The Neander-Tholuck school saw the energising image

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1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of the Dead, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, published posthumously in book form in 1894. (first published in a series of articles in The Monthly Interpreter in 1885), pp. 237, 238.

of the risen Christ -- the archetype in which was realised God's idea of humanity -- in a one-to-one relationship to the same, but previously unrealised, idea in the minds of the apostles; it saw this lively image as the continuing and present source of the leavening power and life of the church.

The development from the mainly external and inferential apologetics to the theology that followed from the immediacy of the "life-and-leaven" approach found its foci in the two modes of viewing the resurrection of Christ. It would seem that Milligan was intent upon preserving all the best values of the external evidence without having to bind the spiritual within the network of probabilities and inferences based solely on that evidence. Accordingly, the question in regard to Christ's non-appearance to the world of non-disciples would mark that point where the narrowing of the circle of external evidence must draw to a halt and where the evidentialist must be constrained to acknowledge that room is to be allowed for something more than evidence.

1. The Evidential Answer

In the preliminary portion of his answer to the question, Milligan followed the evidential line as far as he thought it legitimately could take him.

In the first place, the evidence we have is sufficient; no more is needed.

In the second place, the disciples were better witnesses than the Scribes, Pharisees, and the multitude would have been. The

disciples were only too unready to believe. The Scribes and Pharisees and those under their influence, unlike the "neologists" of Milligan's day, did not believe the resurrection to be an impossibility. If there was no idea of natural science among the disciples, neither was there a belief in the fixed and invariable laws of nature on the part of the chief priests and Pharisees. They knew that Jesus had predicted His resurrection. They feared it might happen. Therefore, the same belittling directed to the disciples' evidence could have been applied with even greater force to those who had been Christ's enemies. (As has been done in Paul's case; though Milligan did not mention this.)

In the third place, Milligan considered another supposition and thus drew closer to the chief difficulty of the evidentialist's approach. Even though it is true that the testimony to Christ's resurrection is believer's evidence, we cannot assume that the appearance of the risen Christ was in itself enough to bring about belief in Him. Suppose that Christ had appeared to His enemies and they had <u>not</u> believed in Him. What would the result have been?

In an earlier article (1866) Milligan had written:

> "It would have been vain to plead the strength of prejudice, the power of hatred, the determination so often shown not to believe, but rather to charge on the Redeemer an alliance with Beelzebub. Here, it would have been said, was something different from all this. Here was a simple question of the evidence of the senses, and if there was prejudice on the one [the enemies'] side, there was at least as much prejudice on the other [the disciples' side] to counterbalance it."[1]

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1. W. Milligan, "Resurrection of Christ", <u>The Imperial Bible-Dictionary</u>, Blackie and Son, London, 1866, p. 768.

In the 1869 article, written specifically to answer the question, Milligan again considered what the result would have been if Jesus had appeared to His enemies and they had not believed. It would have been said that the unbelief was due to the lack of real evidence, for otherwise they must have believed. Consequently, it would have been felt that a deception was involved. Milligan found it difficult to find any reply to this criticism that might have been the least convincing. At the basis of this argument there is the belief that an actual confrontation with the risen Christ of necessity would have convinced the beholder that He was divine. Such a belief was to be modified.

> "On these grounds, then, alone we may feel entitled to say that the non-appearance of Jesus to his enemies after his resurrection is a gain rather than a loss to the Christian cause."[1]

But were these answers enough? Was it enough to have shown that Christ's non-appearance to the world was dictated only by the considerations of its evidential value? Could there be another reason, a deeper one, for the fact that Jesus did not appear to Caiaphas and the world at large?

2. Seeking the Deeper Answer

The further development of the answer involved a greater emphasis on the person of Christ.

> "Throughout the whole of our Lord's life, the causes of his acting as He did lay deeper than any mere desire to give evidence of the Divine character of his mission. That acting was the simple and natural expression of what He was,

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1. W. Milligan, "Why did Jesus, after His Resurrection, appear only to His Disciples?" The Sunday Magazine, 1869, p. 611.

> and of what He felt it right to show himself to be in the various companies in which he mingled, in the ever varying positions in which he found himself. Even the miracles which He wrought and to which He was himself accustomed to appeal in proof of the claims put forward by Him, flowed from another source than the thought of evidence. Evidence they were. All He said and did was evidence. He was his own evidence, just as light is evidence of its own existence. But light exists for far other purposes than to prove that it is light; and for purposes proportionately not less sublime and beneficent, the Redeemer regulated his whole course of conduct in the world...The inquiry, therefore, must still be made whether there are no intimations in Scripture guiding us to reasons altogether different from those already mentioned, why the risen Jesus did not show himself to all men."[1]

William Milligan found this deeper answer to the question through the very nature of Christ's risen body and resurrection-state; and it was this disclosure which led him to attempt to form a theology of the resurrection, for it was in the risen Lord that he found the true object of theology.

3. The Nature of the Fact

In turning to the person of the risen Lord Jesus Christ as the regulative centre of theology, William Milligan came to see that this object demands a specific mode of apprehension; and it is the working out of the relationship between the theological object and the manner in which He is to be apprehended that determined the final development of his theology.

As we may recall, in Milligan's St. Andrews essays there are acknowledgements of the importance of the resurrection of Christ as a fact in the evidential scheme, and of the resurrection of the body

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1. Ibid. p. 611.

as a most important revealed doctrine; but there was no attempt to form a clear conception of the nature of the risen body. In an article on the resurrection of Christ, published in 1866, though the evidences are dealt with at some length, Milligan made the following statement:

> "In conclusion, when we think of these aspects of the resurrection, it may at once appear how vain and unnecessary are all inquiries as to the precise nature of the resurrection body either in Christ's case or our own."[1]

It is enough, we are told, that Christ was still the Saviour and that we shall also be the individuals we are.

In the article, "Why did Jesus, after His Resurrection, appear only to His Disciples?", published in 1869, Milligan, though of course continuing to hold to the continuity between the risen body and the pre-resurrection body of Christ, revealed his new estimation of the importance of the <u>difference</u> between the two:

> "Much, indeed, in that life ["the Redeemer's post-resurrection life"] is dark to us. We cannot determine with any degree of certainty, what the difference between the body of Jesus before and after the resurrection was. In many respects it was undoubtedly the same. He could be recognised...Yet it is not less evident that there was a difference, as is indicated by his sudden appearances among the disciples, and his sudden withdrawals from their sight...His body could not have been in every respect similar to what it was."[2]

In coming to the awareness of the importance of the difference, Milligan might simply have been heeding a warning that Chalmers had given to his students: We are likely to confound where we ought

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1. William Milligan, "Resurrection of Christ", <u>The Imperial Bible-Dictionary</u>, II, Blackie and Son, London, 1866, p. 770.
2. W. Milligan, "Why did Jesus after His Resurrection, appear only to His Disciples?" <u>The Sunday Magazine,</u> 1869, pp. 611, 612.

to discriminate.[1]

In his book, The Resurrection of our Lord (first delivered in a series of lectures in 1879-80), Milligan stated:

> "...it is impossible not to see that whatever the amount of likeness, a marked change had taken place in our Lord's resurrection-body; and the same narratives tell us also of the change. Thus, not only on the day of His Resurrection, but on the first day of the following week, -- the very occasion, that is, when He invited Thomas to put his fingers into the prints of the nails, and his hands into His side, -- we are told that He came and stood in the midst of the disciples although the doors were shut; and, from the marked manner in which the Evangelist repeats the statement, it is clear that he regarded this mode of entrance as supernatural."[2]

In a note on this passage, Milligan refers the reader to the Commentary on the Gospel of St. John, which he had written about the same time in collaboration with William F. Moulton. A portion of the comment on John 20.19, which undoubtedly helped Milligan to arrive at a clearer conception of the nature of Christ's risen body, follows:

> "John would show us that while He is substantially the same, yet it is Jesus filled with the Spirit whom we behold...This aim of our Evangelist also explains the stress which is laid upon the fact that this manifestation of Jesus took place 'when the doors had been shut'...Any idea, therefore, of the withdrawal of the bolts of the doors must be at once dismissed. It is impossible to do justice to the passage unless we admit that, at a moment when the doors were shut and when no one could enter through them in the ordinary way, Jesus suddenly stood in the midst of the disciples. But this is all that we have the right to say.... How He thus appeared through the physical obstacles presented by a room closed on every side it is not possible for us to say. The properties of matter spiritualised and glorified are entirely unknown to us from any experience of our own, nor is light thrown on them further than this, -- that Jesus, in His glorified humanity, had the power of being present when He pleased, without reference to the ordinary laws which control the movements of men. In this

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1. T. Chalmers, Evidences of the Christian Revelation, T. Constable & Co., Edinburgh, 1855, pp. 27, 28.

2. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905, pp. 17, 18.

> absolute subjection of the body to the Spirit, John sees proof and illustration of the fact that in the person of Jesus dualism has disappeared, and that the perfect unity of body and spirit has been reached. The old struggle between the material and the spiritual, between the limited and unlimited, has been brought to an end; the spiritual and the unlimited have absolute control."[1]

Of course, the Old Testament does not speak of a need to overcome a dualism, nor were the followers of Christ seeking from Him a resolution of the mind-body problem. Herein we may detect Milligan's basically Greek approach to the New Testament. This is not to say, however, that such a perspective is wrong, for among other things, the revelation of the glorified Lord is the resolution of dualism.

We should notice in the remainder of the note, following his reference to the commentary on John's Gospel, that Milligan recorded both that he agreed with and differed from Calvin in the interpretation of John 20.19,26:

> "Calvin has rightly styled all the remarks that had been made in his day, and that have been repeated by so many down to the present hour, as to our Lord's entering the room through the pores of the wood of the closed doors, pueriles argutiae. Such a thought, obviously, never entered the Evangelist's mind. At the same time, Calvin's own explanation, that the doors opened of their own accord, is equally untenable."[2]

Let us look at Calvin's conception of the body of the risen Christ and compare it to Milligan's conception. Calvin's comment on the phrase, and while the doors are shut, follows:

> "We ought...to believe that Christ did not enter without a miracle, in order to give a demonstration of his Divinity, by which he might stimulate the attention of his disciples;

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1. W. Milligan and W. Moulton, The Gospel of St. John, in A Popular Commentary, ed. P. Schaff, II, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1880, pp. 225, 226.
2. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905, p. 241.

> and yet I am far from admitting the truth of what the Papists assert, that the body of Christ passed through the shut doors. Their reason for maintaining this is, for the purpose of proving not only that the glorious body of Christ resembled a Spirit, but that it was infinite, and could not be confined to any one place. But the words convey no such meaning; for the Evangelist does not say that he entered through the shut doors, but that he suddenly stood in the midst of his disciples, though the doors had been shut, and had not opened to him by the hand of man. We know that Peter [Acts xii, 10 ('...they came to an iron gate leading into the city. It opened to them of its own accord, and they went out...'R.S.V.)] went out of a prison which was locked; and must we, therefore, say that he passed through the midst of the iron and the planks? Away, then, with that childish trifling, which contains nothing solid, and brings along with it many absurdities! Let us be satisfied with knowing that Christ intended by a remarkable miracle to confirm his disciples in their belief of his resurrection."[1]

Calvin's comment on Luke 24, 36 follows:

> "He [Luke] does not, indeed, say that Christ, by his divine power, opened for Himself, the doors which were shut, (John xx, 26:) but something of this sort is indirectly suggested by the phrase which he employs, Jesus stood. For how could our Lord suddenly, during the night, stand in the midst of them, if he had not entered in a miraculous manner?"[2]

It would appear from these two passages from Calvin that Milligan's emphasis on the difference between Christ's risen body and His pre-resurrection body (while maintaining the continuity and personal identity) is more true to Scripture than Calvin's emphasis on the identity and apparent inability to imagine or conceive that the wood or any other material object would not have proven an obstacle to Christ's bodily entrance into the room. Calvin perhaps allowed his antagonism to "the Papists" to influence his exegesis; for, in apparent reaction to their regarding Christ's risen body as resembling "a spirit" and as being "infinite", he tended to see

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1. J. Calvin, Commentary on the Gospel according to John, trans. W. Pringle, II, The Calvin Translation Society, Edinburgh, 1847, p. 264.
2. J. Calvin, Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew Mark and Luke, trans. W. Pringle, III, The Calvin Translation Society, 1846, p. 368.

the risen body -- even though he spoke of it as "glorious" -- as necessarily having no other way of entering the upper room than by some aperture -- a miraculously opened door.

Charles Hodge, a nineteenth century Calvinist, identified the resurrection body with the pre-resurrection body to the extent of saying that no change took place in its nature at the resurrection:

> "The last Adam, therefore, was made a quickening spirit, by the union of the divine with the human in the constitution of his person. Others say that it was at his resurrection; and others at his ascension. As to the former opinion, it is enough to say, that no change took place at his resurrection in the nature of Christ's body."[1]

Milligan's answer to such an identification was the following:

> "The real argument of the Apostle is that, at the Resurrection, the body which rises, if in one sense, because our body, the same, is, in another and most important sense, a different body. Were it not different, we should have to suppose that the same change will take place on it after its resurrection, as that described by the Apostle in I Cor. xv 52, and there confined by him to those who have not 'fallen asleep'. A double change would await believers who have died, -- a resurrection to their old condition, and then a change to a new condition. Scripture knows nothing of this double change."[2]

There are other considerations that could have contributed to the moulding of Calvin's conception of Christ's risen body. In the first place there was Calvin's rightful insistence on the distinction between the two natures of Christ. To view the risen body of Christ as having been transformed would perhaps have appeared to Calvin as a blurring of that distinction, or as an introduction of a kind of third nature, neither human nor divine. But the nature of Christ's

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1. C. Hodge, An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, The Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1958, p. 351.
2. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905, p. 245.

risen body is no less human for having been transformed by the Spirit; indeed it is such a body -- a spiritual body -- that God has intended, from the beginning, that man should have. And such a body, through Holy Spirit and in union with the risen Christ, we shall have at the resurrection.

This leads to the second point. It appears that Calvin could have allowed his conception of the risen body of Christ to be determined by his preconception of the nature of 'body' as such, rather than by the absolutely unique fact of the risen body itself. Though he thought of the risen body as glorified, such glorification seems to mean no more than that it is immortal; and the glorification of Christ's human body seems not to have altered the characteristics of that body at all. A body, according to Calvin, is that which has its own distinctive measure, keeps its place, and can be seen and touched.[1]

Calvin's thinking on this matter seems to have been as follows:

It is impossible, even for God, to make a body be a body and not a body at the same time. A body ceases to be a body if conceived as being in heaven and on earth at the same time. Christ's risen body, being a localised body, cannot be in two localities at once. When Christ was in the upper room, after the resurrection, He, in His human nature, was not in heaven. And his human body, even though glorified, was subject to the same limitations (except death) as every other body (therefore, the door was very likely opened by a

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1. J. Calvin, Institutes, IV, 17, 24.

divine miracle in order that He might enter the room). After Christ's ascension into heaven, his body was no longer present in this world. The impossibility of Christ's body being in two locations on earth at the same time is equally applicable to the two locations, earth and heaven. The body of Christ is either on earth or in heaven; it is in heaven; therefore -- the law of non-contradiction -- Christ (in his human nature, at least) cannot be on earth.

For Calvin it was impossible to hold at one and the same time to the doctrines of the localisation and ubiquity of Christ's risen body; it was either/or.

Herein, it may have been that Calvin allowed a conception of the absolute distinction between flesh and spirit to apply to the risen body of Christ, without submitting this conception to the fact that the glorification of the body of Christ in His Resurrection modified the nature of that body. It became a spiritual body, capable of being in heaven and in earth at one and the same time. Once it is realised that the glorification of Christ's body in His resurrection involved an entrance into another state or dimension -- the sphere of the Spirit -- without thereby being excluded from the sphere of Soma, the ubiquity of Christ's glorified body need no longer be regarded as contradictory to its localisation.

May it not have been that Calvin's cosmology influenced his interpretation of Scripture in his insistence that Christ's body could not be on earth and in heaven at one and the same time?

> "Incidentally, this prompts me to wonder how far Calvin may have been led by his cosmological conceptions, and especially by his attachment to the ancient world-system, to put so much

> emphasis upon this localization of the body of the Christ above the visible sphere of the heavens and yet in a given position of space."[1]

It could be said that William Milligan's most significant contribution to the theology of his time was its re-direction to the risen Lord and the unique dimension of His bodily presence, out of which theology was to accomplish its work. For instance, a right regard for the unique nature of Christ's glorified body would tend to lead to a resolution of the conflict between those who hold that the communicatio idiomatum involves the ubiquity of Christ's risen, ascended body and those who put such a stress upon the extra-Calvinisticum that it begins to become an ultra-Calvinisticum.[2]

It goes without saying that Calvin wanted to avoid a docetic spiritualisation of Christ's body; but this should not necessarily have led him to ridicule the belief that the risen Lord passed through the material barrier and to favour the conjecture that the door of the upper room was opened miraculously. It is true that Scripture does not state that Christ passed through the door, but neither does Scripture mention that the door was opened for Him to enter. The most natural sense of the passages (John 20.19,26) is that the door was shut throughout the entire scenes related in John 20.19-23 and 26-29. What St. Paul called the spiritual body can have its distinctive measure, keep its place, and be seen and touched, at His will, without thereby being confined to the same limitations that apply to

1. F. Wendel, Calvin, trans. P. Mairet, Collins, The Fontana Library, London, 1963, p. 348.
2. "...it cannot be denied that the Reformed totus intra et extra offers at least as many difficulties as the Lutheran totus intra." K. Barth, Church Dogmatics, 1.2, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1956, p. 170.

our present bodies. A spiritual body is not less a body for being spiritual. It is true body, more so than these. Nor, just because it is not subject to the same limitations, should it be called infinite. The ubiquity of Christ in the sense of 'infinite', was rightly attributed to His divine nature only, for there is no Scriptural justification for the belief that the body of Christ encloses in a spatial sense the whole universe. Nevertheless, such might be the nature of the body of the risen Christ that, while keeping its own distinctive measure, it is ubiquitous in the sense that in the new dimension established through its having come into being it is present in depth to the whole of creation. Is it not in this direction that we are drawn by the risen Lord Himself? And has not Reformation theology re-emphasised the fact that though our Lord now exists bodily we are not to conceive of His bodily existence as a simple extension of the dimensions of this world?[1] To do so is to attempt to subject the proper Object of Theology to our own presuppositions. Rather must we be willing to allow all our thoughts to be mastered by the risen, exalted Lord Himself.

When theology is conceived and executed from out of the context of the risen Lord, then its real analogical nature is exhibited. William Milligan was led toward this position in his obedience to the Spirit of truth and loyalty to the Word of God. Indeed, it was Milligan's conception of the risen Lord in His glorified human nature that enabled him to interpret the whole of Scripture in His light, even Genesis, for with the understanding that the end of man's

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1. J.C. McLelland, "Mythology and Theological Language", Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol. II, Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh, 1958, pp. 15, 16.

development is seen in the risen humanity of Christ, we can go to Genesis and interpret it in the following way: Adam's body before the Fall was not that body God had in mind for him in the future. True, Adam had not then sinned in the body, but neither had he eaten of the tree of life. In a sense, then, death was a possibility, which, upon Adam's eating of the tree of life, would have been cancelled. But Adam's sin brought him under the dominion of death, and it was impossible for him then to eat of the tree of life as it had been intended for him to do. Christ, in identifying Himself with the fallen Adam, in obedience to God's word, 'Thou shalt surely die', was subject to death. But at the resurrection, the dead, fallen, Adamic body of Christ, in being raised to life, was raised not to the condition of Adam before the Fall but to the condition, as it were, into which Adam would have been transformed, had he not only not sinned but had he also eaten of the tree of life -- i.e. had he been enabled to partake of the divine nature. The glorious "extra" in which Adam had no share even before the Fall, has been made ours by participation, through Holy Spirit -- the Holy Spirit adapted by the "experience" of the incarnation of the Word -- in union with the risen ascended Lord, who lives not only in His glorified humanity but in His glorifying divinity. In being made to share in His glorious humanity, we are thereby given to be partakers of His divine nature, through His unspeakable grace and love. And this is William Milligan's thinking on the subject.[1]

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1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of the Dead, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1894, pp. 234, 235, 170, 171.
W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905, pp. 133-135.

Milligan noted that the Presbyterian Churches of the nineteenth century were holding to the complete identity of the risen body -- during "the forty days" at least -- with the pre-resurrection body:

> "Even Dr. Hodge of Princeton ('System. Theol.' iii.;. 775), from whom the words quoted in the text ["the very body which hung upon the cross and was laid in the grave, rose again from the dead"] are taken, declares there 'can be no doubt that it was so', and that 'otherwise there would have been no Resurrection'. In this Dr. Hodge expresses the general opinion of at least all the Presbyterian Churches."[1]

Over against what he deemed to be the general opinion of the Reformed Church William Milligan stressed the importance of the fact that the raising of Christ's body wrought a most significant change in it.[2]

> "Facts like these [the appearance in the room, the words to Mary Magdalene] undoubtedly lead us to infer that after His Resurrection our Lord was not the same as He had been before He died, and that the body with which He came forth from Joseph's tomb was different from that which had been laid in it, and was already glorified."[3]

Indeed, so central is this distinction to Milligan's conception of the resurrection-body of Christ, and therefore to the whole of his theology, that he called it

> "...the fundamental proposition of the present Lectures, that the body with which our Lord rose from the grave, though still a true body, was not the same as that with which He died."[4]

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1. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, p. 239.
2. Even Barth, though acknowledging the difference, seems to see little importance in the fact, for to him the importance of the Resurrection resides chiefly in its revelation of the reconciliation accomplished at the cross. K. Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. IV., part 2, pp. 144, 145, 140-144. See Appendix, Note X.
3. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905, p. 14.
4. Ibid. p. 31.

4. The Absolutely Unique Fact

William Milligan looked to the risen Lord as the truly unique fact; and it was to this Fact that he would direct his readers' attention. Of course, the uniqueness of Christ resides in His Person as the eternal Son of God, but that uniqueness must not be abstracted, as is so often done, from His incarnation. Whatever we know of the disincarnate Word must be defined in the light of the Incarnate Word. In the face of the Incarnate Word we know God as He is, inherently in Himself. The attempt to extrapolate from the Incarnate to the Disincarnate in order to know God as He really was before the Incarnation must ever be controlled by what we know of God through the incarnate Son. When John wrote, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God", surely he wrote from the perspective of one whose being and thoughts had been captured by Jesus, the Risen-Crucified. What he knew concerning the Word he had learned in contact with that which he saw and heard and touched both before and after the Crucifixion; and the coherence of his theology maintained an empirical reference to Jesus. The testimony of the Spirit was and is to the incarnate Son, as well as, through the risen Son, to the Father. For example, genuine knowledge of creation through the Word is controlled by the incarnate Redeemer. In other words we start with Jesus Christ and view all things in His light, and we return to Jesus Christ. This holds true even in regard to the Trinity. The Father and the Spirit are known in truth only in relation to the incarnate Son. Only the Son is incarnate; neither the Father nor the Spirit became flesh and dwelt among us.

God the Father and God the Spirit are co-equal to the Son but we know they are nothing but abstractions apart from the incarnate Son.

The importance of Milligan's emphasis on the uniqueness of the body of the risen Son resides in the fact that, if everything to be seen aright must be seen in the light of the incarnate Son, a development or change within the Incarnation must be reflected not only in the whole of creation but also within the Godhead Itself. And, if this be so, that development must be reflected in theology also. Milligan rightly pin-pointed that development in drawing the Church's attention to the Scriptural testimony and through that testimony to the unique humanity of the risen Son. This change was noticed on the empirical level. This is the one locus in the whole of the New Testament where there was witnessed a distinction, empirically and qualitatively between Christ's bodily existence and the bodily existence of all other men. He was born; others are born. He suffered; others suffered. He died; others died. He was crucified; others were crucified. He was raised from the dead; others were raised from the dead. He was raised to a new bodily existence, no longer under the dominion of death. In this He was and is unique. We have the testimony of those who saw and touched this unique One. Our theology then must take cognisance of this distinction, and this distinction that empirically impressed the eye witnesses must be allowed to have its effect in every phase of theology. Milligan enabled the Church to see this.

> "The Lord Jesus rose, but not to His old condition -- that is the teaching of the New Testament, and the whole value of Christ's Resurrection is involved in it."[1]

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1. Ibid. pp. 31, 32.

Herein is discerned the fundamental insight of William Milligan's theology: the resurrection of Jesus Christ involved a change in His condition or mode of existence.

> "The difference of the body, however...does not stand alone. It was connected with a change of state."[1]

We must remember, however, that the whole of Christ's life in obedience to the Father was a turning, a repentance on our behalf. It might indeed be said that the climax in the change wrought for us occurred in the death and resurrection of Christ; but this should not obscure the fact that our salvation was being worked out by our Lord in all that He did and suffered in His life on earth. Milligan did not deny this; yet it does seem that he neglected it in his effort to focus attention upon the more climacteric events of the Death and Resurrection.

The uniqueness of Christ's risen body also resides in the fact that not only was it revealed as being different from all other known bodies but that it is a body that has continued in existence from the moment of the resurrection and abides even now and will endure forever. It was not merely a past factual particular but is a present, eternal state. Therein was Christ revealed as the eternal Son of God in power. An absolutely and uniquely new fact came into being and continues in its powerful existence in the risen Lord. A new sphere of spiritual -- yet bodily -- existence was revealed. God's will had been done in earth, in the earthly body of Christ. The short Biblical expression for this resurrection-

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1. W. Milligan, "Why did Jesus after His Resurrection, appear only to His Disciples?", The Sunday Magazine, 1869, p. 611.

state of Christ, according to Milligan, is πνεῦμα.

It would be a mistake to think that Milligan's insistent concentration on the body of Christ led to his neglecting the spiritual and the Spirit. What that concentration revealed most clearly, however, was that there is no room in Christianity for any dualism of the spiritual and the material. Here is where any lingering doubt as to whether Milligan's idealism ever allows for the bridging of the gap between the intellectual and the sensible is once for all laid to rest. For Milligan body and Spirit are defined in relation to the incarnate Son, risen and ascended. The incarnational union and the procession of the Spirit from the Father and through the Son's risen humanity must control our thinking about the relation between the Spiritual and the bodily. The Spirit created the body and controls the body but is not known apart from the body -- even in the Godhead, following the Ascension. But such is the basic condition of the new bodily state in the risen Christ that Milligan, in conformity to the New Testament, calls it
This term is not used to deny the bodily existence of the risen Lord but only to emphasise that now that body is completely under the control of the Spirit. The Spirit has moulded and adapted the flesh assumed by the Word in the incarnation. The moulding was a constant struggle in this world, because it was our flesh He took. When Christ on the cross yielded His Spirit to the Father, the battle had been won; and at His resurrection some previous limitations of the flesh were broken through. Thus it is that His new state may be described as πνεῦμα .[1]

1. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, pp. 246, 247.

In a further description of Christ's resurrection-state, especially in its relation to man's present existence, Milligan wrote:

> "He was then [when He was on earth] subject to all the limitations and weaknesses of the flesh. The πνεῦμα was, no doubt, the foundation of His being even then, but in His great act of self-denial and self-sacrifice, He had taken into union with it our 'flesh'. That flesh He had to interpenetrate and to transfigure by its power, completing the work of doing so at His Resurrection. He then entered on the full condition of πνεῦμα in which He had existed before all time, but with this change, that transfigured human nature was now a part of His Being or mode of existence. And thus it is that He effects our redemption from the power of the σάρξ. By that faith which is communion with Him we are made partakers of His πνεῦμα, and are thus gradually raised more and more above the limitations and sufferings of our natural condition. The work in us, however, is not completed here. The 'Spirit' of Christ has first to take full possession of our spirits, and then, at the resurrection, to effect that work upon our bodies which was effected on Christ's body at His Resurrection."[1]

5. The Deeper Answer

When one is aware of the uniqueness of the post-resurrection state of our Lord one has arrived at the reason for His non-appearance to those who had not been prepared for the encounter. According to Milligan, it simply was not possible. The very nature of Christ's post-resurrection state precluded His coming again into contact with the world. Such a meeting would have precipitated another Passion; but that kind of suffering was finished. Now He was to encounter only His disciples that He might "see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied".[2]

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1. Ibid. pp. 255, 256.
2. Ibid. pp. 33, 34.

It should be noted that here Milligan is speaking of Christ's appearances during the forty days and not of His appearance at the last day. Had Milligan been referring to the latter manifestation he might have given as a reason for Christ's non-appearance to the world the very love of Christ for the world, for in a real sense the manifestation of Our Lord at the last day will be the world's judgment. Accordingly, Christ's appearance to the world is delayed for the purpose of giving the world time to repent. But, somehow, this reason for Christ's non-appearance to the world is a bit foreign, as we shall learn, to Milligan's interpretation -- following the Fourth Gospel -- of Christ's coming and His coming again.

It should be remarked, too, that Milligan also saw in the nature of Christ's risen state a telling argument against the chiliastic view of the thousand years' reign mentioned in Revelation 20.[1]

It was not only Christ's risen nature that made His appearance to the world impossible but the very condition of the world itself prevented it. The world could not have understood Him, nor could it have borne witness to Him. The sensuous impressions which had their rightful locus in the appearances to the disciples, would not have been adequate to enable the world truly to apprehend the nature of the risen Christ. Having known Him previously as only a man, the world would have been utterly confused by his sudden appearances and disappearances. It would have seen either a spirit or one who was not the same Jesus it had known. It is not that His non-appearance

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1. W. Milligan, Lectures on the Apocalypse, Macmillan, London, 1892, pp. 198, 199.

to the world was an arbitrary judgment; it was simply a necessary, essential part of the nature of things. Because the world could not have given testimony to the risen Christ, it was not given the opportunity of making the attempt.[1]

Milligan here, in The Resurrection of our Lord, indicated that though the world could not have understood the meaning of Christ's risen state, His risen body probably would have made an impression even on the senses of those who were of the world. But, later, as we learn from his book, The Ascension of Our Lord, Milligan was of the opinion that even the apprehension of the risen Lord, upon His appearances during the forty days, might not have been possible for those whose "state of mind" had not been changed by a spiritual preparation. He was certain that the risen Lord could not have been touched by "the merely human hand" and that He may have been invisible to "the merely human eye".[2] But by those who had been spiritually prepared He was both seen and touched.

> "It would...appear that our Lord designed expressly to distinguish between the tangibility of His own body and that of ordinary matter; and any objection, therefore, resting on the supposition that by tangibility the same thing is meant in both cases, rests upon preconceptions of the objector [Milligan was referring specifically to Strauss] and not upon the facts presented to him."[3]

Here then we have William Milligan's final position in answer to the critical question -- Why did Christ, after His resurrection,

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1. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, pp. 34, 35.
2. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord, (first ed. 1891), Macmillan, London, 1901, pp. 17, 18.
3. Ibid. p. 18.

appear only to His Disciples? The world not only could not have understood the meaning of the risen Christ, it may not even have been able to see Him with the physical eye and undoubtedly could not have touched Him.[1] To think otherwise would be to impose preconceptions on the Scriptural evidence. Not only was Christ existing in a new state; the minds of those who perceived it had been changed into a new state.

> "An entirely new state of things is thus presupposed, not only in the bodily condition of Jesus, but in the mental attitude of believers, when we speak of the body of the Risen Lord as 'manifested'; and in that state the common qualities of material objects cannot be thought of as either exhibited or perceived."[2]

One can understand why Milligan distinguished between the spiritually prepared and those not so prepared to receive the manifestations of the risen Christ. But what is difficult to understand is the certainty with which he states that though the "merely human" (unprepared) eye might have seen the risen Christ the "merely human" (unprepared) hand could not have touched Him. Granted that even the spiritually prepared could not have apprehended the risen Christ had not He willed it. But why then go on to state that even the spiritually unprepared man might have been able to see Him, while refusing to grant that he could have touched Him? Needless to say, this whole question is in the realm of speculation. But the second distinction Milligan made does raise a question the answer to which could throw light on any hidden assumptions that might have had a

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1. Ibid. pp. 17, 18.
2. Ibid. p. 18.

controlling influence on his theology. Why this differentiation between sight and touch? Did Milligan look upon the sense of sight as a more spiritual organ in itself than the sense of touch?

It is certainly apparent throughout William Milligan's writings, however, that he ever attempted to remain true to the Scriptural evidence as well as to the evidence within his heart. Such adherence to the external evidence was demonstrated by his practice and presentation of the science of textual criticism. Prepossessions are not to be allowed to determine whether one reading is more spiritual than another, for a true regard for the textual evidence moulds even one's concept of spirituality. The spirit that would prefer to do without evidence or to explain it away is not of the truth. Even the common meaning of a word -- such as has been seen with the word 'tangible' -- is altered in its application to the chief objective evidence, the risen body of our Lord. The risen, glorified Christ is to occupy the centre of attention and is to be allowed to have all the weight of glory in the valuation of all other external evidence.

D. Resurrection, Ascension and Glorification

Once we have discerned that at His resurrection Christ entered upon a new state or condition, then we can appreciate why it was that those who had rejected him from the beginning, and thus had not been prepared spiritually, were in no position to learn from a manifestation of His risen presence. Not only the condition of those who were not of God but also the very mode in which the risen Christ existed precluded such a confrontation. Accordingly, the chief difficulty obstructing William Milligan's view of the Resurrection of Christ was resolved.

1. The Resurrection and the Ascension

a. A Remaining Problem

There remained another problem -- a less perplexing one perhaps, but nevertheless one that undoubtedly concerned and occupied Milligan not a little. It involved the relationship between the resurrection of Christ and His ascension, that well-attested event which took place forty days after the resurrection. In essence, the matter could be put in this way: if Christ at His resurrection entered upon a new condition or state, in the light of which the central significance of that mighty event was manifested, how then are we to regard that other apparently very meaningful event which occurred quite a few days later and which itself seems to have been an entrance into another condition of being? Does not this later change of state diminish the importance of the great change that was effected in the resurrection? Does not the change of condition that took place in the Ascension relegate the modification wrought in the resurrection into a merely temporary, transitional mode of being? What makes the question more acute is the clear lack of evidence for any change in Christ's condition during the interval.[1] Consequently, it would seem as though the Ascension detracts from the obviously central significance of the Resurrection. How is this difficulty resolved?

In order to exhibit the various nuances in Milligan's consideration of the relationship between Christ's resurrection and His ascension, it seems best to employ the method of question and answer -- giving Milligan's words for the answers in so far as it is possible.

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1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905, p. 16.

Admittedly, Milligan's thought might not be presented here in the order he would have deemed most appropriate; but the writer can think of no better procedure to use in the attempt to present something approaching Milligan's position on the relationship between our Lord's resurrection and His ascension.

b. Question and Answer

Q. "What then, we must ask, was the nature of that state in which the Saviour lived during the forty days preceding his ascension into heaven? Was it a mere transition state, different from what went before, but different also from what followed; and must we pass on to the moment when a cloud received Him out of his disciples' sight, in order that we may fix there the beginning of his glory?"[1]

A. "To this last question we must answer, No: Not the ascension, but the resurrection was the bestowal of that reward which Jesus had been promised by his Father, was the dawning of that joy in the thought of which he had endured the cross, was the grant of that glory for which he had prayed when his work was finishing, 'and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with that glory which I had with thee before the world was'. The reward, the joy, the glory, are not to be sought in the ascension from Mount Olivet into heaven. The ascension itself began in the resurrection. It is in the tomb that we find the great dividing line between humiliation and exaltation, the suffering and reward, and when on the third morning, Jesus burst the band of death, his glorification had begun."[2]

Q. Do you find in Christ's own words any support for your contention that His ascension began in the resurrection?

A. Yes. "...He says to Mary Magdalene, in words which must ever form our main guide on the point before us, 'I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God'; not, I will ascend at some future day, but either with the strict meaning of the present tense, I am ascending, or with the future so beheld in the present, so much a part of it, that it may be spoken of as come. The ascension then is included in the resurrection, or it is to be viewed only as an incidental

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1. W. Milligan, "Why did Jesus after His Resurrection, appear only to His Disciples?", The Sunday Magazine, 1869, pp. 611, 612.

2. Ibid. p. 612.

state in the post-resurrection life."[1]

In fact, upon further consideration, I believe that Jesus was speaking strictly of the present. "...Jesus had said to Mary Magdalene, not, 'I will ascend unto my Father', but 'I ascend'; 'I am even now in the act of ascending -- My Ascension is begun'."[2]

Q. But what do you mean by saying that Christ's ascension began in His resurrection? Does this not imply that Christ's ascension, begun in the resurrection, was completed at a later time? Must there not have been some kind of development, then, during the forty days?

A. There was no development in the sense of a gradual growth. The only possible intermediate stage between Christ's resurrection and his ascension was that in which He appeared to Mary Magdalene.

> "It is peculiarly important to observe that the word ["the word 'manifested' in John XXI"] means much more than that Jesus made Himself known or displayed Himself to His disciples. Nor is it possible to avoid observing that it is the purpose of the Evangelist to draw a marked contrast between the appearance to Mary Magdalene and the three 'manifestations' following it. The contrast may seem even to justify the conclusion that between the appearance to the Magdalene and the next following manifestation, Jesus had already ascended to His Father, and that out of the glory already surrounding Him He subsequently manifested Himself. If this be the case we shall also be better able to explain the ἀναβαίνω of Chap. XX. 17, both in itself, and in its contrast with the ἀναβέβηκα of the earlier part of the same verse."[3]

Q. Such an interpretation raises one or two questions. In the first place, what would have been the motive or special purpose of Jesus' appearance to Mary Magdalene before the completion of His ascension?

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1. Ibid. p. 612.
2. Milligan, The Resurrection of our Lord, p. 311.
3. Ibid. p. 244.

A. In addition to the purpose revealed by His words, Jesus might well have been moved by the very love of Mary for Him. "There she stands without the sepulchre weeping; but once, as she weeps, she ventures to look in. The angels in white catch her eye, 'sitting the one at the head, the other at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain; and they said unto her, Woman, why weepest thou?' Too completely absorbed in one single thought to be alarmed, she explains the cause, and turning back sees by her side one whom she supposed to be the gardener. 'Sir', she said, 'If thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away'. She does not say who she means; so thoroughly is she occupied with her grief that she never for a moment doubts that every one must know the cause. From love like this, so constant and so deep, Jesus can no longer hide himself. 'He saith unto her, Mary'."[1]

Q. The second question relating to the supposition that Christ completed His ascension soon after His resurrection, and that subsequent appearances to the disciples were manifestations of Himself "from out of the glory already surrounding Him", is this: Is not this interpretation in contradiction to what traditionally is called the Ascension, a well-testified event occurring forty days afterthe Resurrection?

A. "It ought to be hardly necessary to say that the notion of a return of Jesus to His Heavenly Father immediately after His Resurrection is by no means inconsistent with the Church doctrine of His Ascension at the end of the forty days. The full meaning of this last great act, the solemn investiture of our Lord with the offices fulfilled by Him in heaven, may still belong to it; but that meaning cannot be discussed here."[2]

Q. If each manifestation of the risen Christ is a revelation out of His ascended, heavenly state, then is there not a common basis

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1. W. Milligan, "Mary Magdalene", The Imperial Bible-Dictionary, II, Blackie & Son, Edinburgh, 1866, p. 179.

2. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, p. 245. The development of the subject of "the solemn investiture of Our Lord with the offices fulfilled by Him in heaven" was to serve as a theme of Milligan's book, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, published in 1891, just two years before his death.

on which to regard the appearances -- including that to Saul -- listed in I Corinthians 15, 6-8?

A. Indeed. "...the similarity of the successive manifestations here recorded will be still more marked. All of them will then be manifestations of One who had already ascended to His Father, and who revealed Himself from His heavenly abode."[1]

Q. But, even if we regard all Christ's manifestations as appearances from out of His ascended, glorified condition, is it not necessary to distinguish between the manifestations that occurred prior to what traditionally is known as the Ascension and those occurring afterwards, such as the manifestations to Stephen and Saul? According to the Scriptural evidence the manifestations belonging to the latter group were restricted to an objective, visual and/or auditory encounter with One who was in heaven, whence there sprang an effulgence of glory. In the earlier class of manifestations, however, notwithstanding the miraculous entrances and exits, there was an undeniable emphasis on the tangible, on a down-to-earthness. Are we not justified in viewing these earlier manifestations more as descents out of heaven to earth than as unveilings of One who was in glory at the Father's right hand?

A. "The question has often been asked by theologians whether our Lord did not return to His Father immediately after his Resurrection from the grave, and whether each of His subsequent appearances upon earth was not a new descent from heaven. What we call the Ascension would then become not His first but His public, formal and final departure from the world."[2]

Yes, it is feasible to regard the down-to-earth aspects of

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1. Ibid. p. 267.

2. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1901, p. 5.

Christ's occasional manifestations during the forty days as "descents" and the laying aside of certain characteristics of his glory. Nevertheless,

> "...if at any instant of that time He appeared to be in no respect different from what He had been while He tabernacled in the flesh, it was because He willed it. As on the Mount of Transfiguration, immediately before entering on the last and most trying scenes of His Passion, He showed Himself in the glory originally belonging to Him, so during the forty days He occasionally laid aside His glory, and assumed a humiliation which was no longer the chief characteristic of His state."[1]

Q. But when we speak of Christ as being in heaven, of His manifesting Himself from out of heaven, and of His descending from heaven, is this not confusing? Indeed, are we not thereby tying ourselves to a scientifically out-dated cosmography, which can be only an unnecessary stumbling-block today?

A. "The question thus raised cannot be properly answered without an examination of the Scriptural meaning of the word 'heaven'; for the conception commonly entertained of heaven seems to be different from that of Scripture."[2]

Q. You do see the difficulty presented by the attempt, especially today, to conceive of a heavenly locality, do you not?

A. Indeed I do. "The difficulty springs from too materialistic a view of those expressions which the poverty of human thought and language compels us to employ. It is unnecessary, in thinking of heaven, to confine ourselves to the thought of any particular locality. We have no need to imagine to ourselves a region either higher than the blue sky or situated in the centre of those millions of starry orbs which move around us in silent majesty. Nor have we to pass onward into that interminable [Newtonian] space which, as we must suppose, stretches beyond the limits of all created things, in order that there at last we may enter into the abodes of everlasting bliss. If such conceptions appear to be demanded by some

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1. Ibid. p. 4.
2. Ibid. p. 5.

expressions of the Word of God, they are at variance with others as well as with its general drift and meaning."[1]

Q. What, then, is the Scriptural meaning of 'heaven'?

A. "In the New Testament, in particular, heaven is contrasted with earth, less as one <u>place</u> than as one <u>state</u> is contrasted with another."[2]

"The thought of locality may, no doubt, be involved in it, but it is not the main thought... Ideally we are in it when we experience, with an immediateness unknown to us in our common lives, the presence of God as a Father, and when we open our hearts to the full manifestations of His grace. It is one of the 'many abiding places' of that 'Father's house' which is not to be regarded as a home in a distant land alone, but is to be found in the universe around us when that universe is beheld in the light of the Father's love... Even now 'our citizenship is in heaven', and what we wait for is not removal from one limited locality to another, but 'the fashioning anew of our body of humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of Christ's glory, according to the working whereby He is able to subject all things unto Himself'."

"When therefore we speak of our Lord's Ascension into heaven we have to think less of a transition from one locality than of a transition from one condition to another. The real meaning of the Ascension is that, in that closing act of His history upon earth, our Lord withdrew from a world of limitations and darkness and sorrows to that higher existence where 'in the presence of God there is fulness of joy, and where at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore'."[3]

Q. Might we then summarise the whole matter in this way?

The ascension of Christ began at His resurrection; and just as the resurrection of Christ was not merely a past event but is a present state, so His ascension was not only a past event but is also a present condition, indeed a present active state. In fact, our Lord's resurrection and His ascension are, in essence, one. "Resurrection from the dead" emphasises

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1. W. Milligan, <u>The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord</u>, Macmillan, London, 1901, p. 21.
2. Ibid. p. 21.
3. Ibid. pp. 25, 26.

the terminus a quo; "ascension into heaven" lays the stress on the terminus ad quem. But essentially, as states or conditions or modifications of being, the two are identical; and it is the incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended, and glorified Lord, in the awesome and inescapable presence of whose holy love we all live and die and shall be raised. This is the Fact -- and the rest follows. Do you agree?

A. Yes, it is something like that. With such an understanding in regard to the relationship between our Lord's resurrection and His Ascension the question

> "as to the precise point of time when Jesus returned to His Father, loses its importance. No sooner did He shake off the bonds of earth, and take His place in the higher spiritual world of which He was ever afterwards to belong, than He may be said to have ascended into heaven. When for a special purpose He again appeared to His disciples as they had known Him during His earthly ministry, He may be said to have descended out of heaven. Wherever He was in that glorified condition which began at His Resurrection, there heaven in its Scripture sense also was; and His very presence with the Father was the rendering of His account. No words needed to be uttered either by the Father or by Him. From the first moment of His entrance into heaven, its inhabitants beheld in Him the Captain of salvation, who had accomplished His appointed work, and in whom the Father was well pleased."[1]

c. A Critique of Milligan's Resolution

It should be asked if Milligan's exposition of the relationship between the resurrection and ascension of our Lord and of His present state is true to Scripture. Is it primitive? Is it helpful? Should it be followed today? With the awareness that Milligan has not yet been allowed to expand on the work of the ascended Lord (this will be done in the next chapter) we nevertheless are in a

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1. Ibid. pp. 26, 27.

position to attempt to evaluate his view thus far set forth.

Milligan's interpretation is Scriptural. He attempted to arrive at a coherent exposition of the resurrection and ascension, consistent with Scripture. As we have been led to expect from Milligan, it is true that his panoramic, simultaneous, unitary -- Milligan would have said, idealist -- perspective is more dependent upon the Fourth Gospel than upon the most strictly chronological, consecutive presentation of the Synoptics. It may be said, too, that Milligan's view is not primitive in the sense that it was made explicit by the early Church; but, following his own idea of the development of theology, it is not contradictory to the primitive position, which required only that it be made explicit to meet the exigencies of a later day.

It seems to this writer that Milligan's interpretation of the resurrection-ascension complex is helpful in that it not only sets forth a unitary view but also provides an explanation of 'where' our Lord was between His appearances during 'the forty days' -- and all this consistently with Scripture. Nor is the way that we interpret the Ascension irrelevant and inconsequential; indeed we can agree with Professor John C. McLelland's estimate of its significance:

> "The real scandal and problem for theological science is raised neither by the Virgin Birth nor by the events of Good Friday and Easter Sunday, but by the Ascension. For this infinite recession into the being of God happens to a crucified and risen humanity, so that the problem is not so much that of mythopoeic limitation or direction but of the specifically, biblical doctrine of 'sign' or 'mystery'. Jesus is not transformed into a kind of 'megaphone or loud-speaker' whose words sound down the ages, but is revealed

> as the divine-human Person continuing as personally operative in spite of and because of his new dimension of existence."[1]

William Milligan would have been in full agreement with the above, for he, too, was not writing in a theological vacuum but as conscious of the threat to true theology posed by the dialectic employed by the philosophico-theologians epitomised by David Strauss.

When Milligan points to the resurrection-ascension state of our Lord he is directing his readers to Him as He is now and to the new dimension He occupies, for it is this unique Person -- in the uniqueness of His own place and time -- to whom we should submit our thinking regarding Him and His relationship to believers and to the world.

Just as Milligan was aware that the perception of the Lord risen differs from the perception of Him before the resurrection, so he saw that the place the Lord occupies now is different from location as we know it in this world, and that the difference is determined by the very nature of the incarnate, risen, ascended Lord.

When Milligan stated that we have difficulty with the idea of a local heaven he thereby indicated that he was aware of the same kind of obstacle by which we are confronted today. When he spoke of those who have too materialistic a conception of heaven, he did not mean that heaven is purely 'spiritual' in contradistinction to 'material'. In saying this he was looking to Christ in His risen, ascended humanity and in the new dimension dictated by this unique

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1. J.C. McLelland, "Mythology and Theological Language", Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol. XI, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1958, p. 20.

existence of our Lord.

Here again we are made aware that there is no place in Milligan's theology for a radical disjunction between the intellectual and sensible spheres. The incarnation is carried through to the goal in the ascension. Reconciliation and union have been wrought. Christ the pioneer has carried humanity, cleansed, into the eternal, holy fellowship of the Trinity. Man's fallen existence has received healing and has been given a place of its own in union with the Son of God. It is this gift to man in his time and place of an eternal status with God that flies in the face of any demythologising attempt to deny such a status. Because of the hypostatic union of God and man in Jesus Christ humanity receives its real fulfilment in the ascension and is eternally anchored in the Godhead, without confusion. It is this securing of humanity in union with God that gives a substantial basis to the Apostolic witness of Scripture and to the Church and her mission in history.[1]

Milligan was aware, too, that the ordinary meanings of words when applied to Christ are improper and require a remoulding under the pressure of His special presence, in an analogical relation to the risen God-man. We have seen that this is true in regard to the word 'tangible'. Milligan undoubtedly would have assured us that it is true also with such words as 'place' and 'time' and 'body' and to Christ's being at 'the right hand' of the Father. What he saw in common with genuine theologians is that our language about God has received a remoulding by God Himself in the Person of His Son and that in order to have the right perspective we need the Holy,

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1. See T.F. Torrance,"The Resurrection of Jesus Christ", an unpublished paper.

even Christ's own, Spirit to enable us to think along with Christ and thereby to have His mind. We will consider in the next chapter how Milligan's idealism might have modified this view, but it is needful just now to see that he was attempting to direct his readers' attention away from themselves and to the Lord, who by His Spirit even now conforms our minds to His mind and will conform our bodies to His body.

2. The Glorification of Our Lord

To consider the fact of Christ's Resurrection together with His Ascension without dealing with His glorification would ultimately frustrate the attempt to explicate the context in which William Milligan viewed not only the Resurrection and Ascension but the whole history of the divine economy.

a. Glory, Inner and Outer

According to Milligan the glory revealed by Christ in His appearances to the disciples during the forty days is not to be associated with any kind of outer shining.[1] This is not to say, however, that what the disciples actually saw and touched had nothing to do with their perceiving the glory of Christ. Indeed, it was only by such sensuous contact with the risen Christ that the disciples were put in a position to know more clearly what His glory is and whereby to discern the true meaning of the word 'glory'. It was the very bodily confrontation by Him who had come through suffering, humiliation, and death that visibly and tangibly impressed the amazed

1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905. pp. 22, 23.

disciples and remoulded the meaning of the word 'glory'. Without Christ's bodily appearances to the disciples they might have missed the sight of an integral part of the Christian teaching -- that preparatory to receiving the rewards of Christianity there must be suffering and self-sacrifice. Milligan saw the appearances during the Forty Days as the basis of all Christian training, even though it is the Spirit's function to bring home this teaching to the learner. Therefore the disciples had to be confronted in the person of Jesus Christ, who had bound together indissolubly in Himself suffering and exaltation, humiliation and glory.[1]

b. The Glory of Sonship

It was in seeing Him who had been through death on their behalf and who now stood before them that the disciples beheld in His face the glory of God; and the glory of God in Christ is the glory of Sonship.

> "...the meaning of which ('we beheld His glory', John, 1.14) is fixed by the opening passage in the First Epistle (I John 1, 1-3). The glory was like that of an only son sent from a father; no image but this, it has been well said, "can express the two-fold character of the glory, as at once derivative and on a level with its source'. In the only son are concentrated all the characteristics of the father; on him all the father's love is poured; to him belongs the whole inheritance; on him the father, when he sends him forth on an embassy, bestows all the plenitude of his power."[2]

But what the disciples saw and touched -- though it had a lesson of its own to teach -- must <u>not</u> be isolated from what they heard. To accompany the tangible and visual objectivity of His body our Lord

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1. Milligan, <u>The Ascension</u>, pp. 4, 5.
2. W. Milligan and W. Moulton. <u>The Gospel of St. John</u>. T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1880, p. 8.

provided His own commentary; the image and the word were not to be dissociated, as often happens in our resurrection amnesia. For instance, by referring to the Father, Christ enabled the disciples to associate the present, seen glory of a bodily life that had come through death, with the loving will of His unseen Father and their Father. Not only was the word 'Father' given its paradigmatic weight of meaning within the context of resurrection but the correlative word 'Son' also received its true stamp therein.

> "The thought of the Resurrection is thus included in the word 'Son'."[1]

c. The Spirit, the Glory, and a Shared Life

Though the instruction received by the disciples during the forty days was a necessary propaedeutic for a deeper entrance into the knowledge of the glory of Christ it was only upon receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit that they were made fully aware that glory is the glory of Sonship. When, under the influence of the invading Holy Spirit of Christ, they cried out "Abba, Father", at that instant they knew that Christ was sharing His divine-human life with His own; and that life is the life of Sonship. Thus it was that the Holy Spirit, adapted by the Incarnate risen humanity of Christ, gathered up, as it were, all the outward, sensible impressions made upon them by Christ, and baptised them into the holy body of the living Son Himself. Through the Spirit all the evidences, both outward and inward, conspired to make the disciples aware of the glory of Sonship in Christ.

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1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905, p. 85.

Paul himself depended upon the tradition of the testimony of Christ and the outward evidences accompanying Christ's revelation to him, but it was the Spirit of the risen Christ who brought conviction to him and gave him the internal evidence of the experience of a shared Life, "...and to any who would have denounced this as enthusiasm or self-delusion he would simply have replied, 'I know in whom I have believed'."[1]

It is when Christ shares His life of Sonship with believers that they are thereby enabled to know the glory of that Sonship, for then it becomes an experience of the Son's love for the Father and the Father's love for the Son, through the Holy Spirit.

> "...the 'glory' for which He prayed, though essentially the same as ever, was also different, in so far as He was different. He had taken our humanity into union with His Divinity, and the life which He carried with Him into the heavenly sanctuary was the life, not simply of God, but of the man Christ Jesus. This was the 'living sacrifice' which, with His people in Him, He presented to the Father, in union with whom not only reconciliation but Divine life is found."[2]

Within the glory of the incarnate Word, however, there is something that for ever distinguishes Him from all other men who, sharing in His glory, enjoy the perfecting of their humanity.

Herein is found the safeguard that prevents our looking upon Christ as merely the one who fulfilled in himself the idea of humanity. That Milligan saw this point indicates that with all his admiration for what Schleiermacher had done to enliven theology by humanising

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1. Milligan, The Resurrection of the Dead, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1894, p. 163.
2. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1901, p. 140.

it there was a limit beyond which it was heretical to proceed.

> "In the glory of the Incarnate Word there are two elements, as His one Person unites two natures: in part the glory is unique (in kind and not only in degree), belonging to the God-man and not to the perfect Man; in part it is communicable to men, as Jesus Himself says, 'The glory which Thou gavest me I have given them'."[1]

d. A Glory to be Seen and Acknowledged

If the glory of Christ is the glory of Sonship, then the glorification of Christ is the glorification of His Sonship. The truth that the glory of God is meant to be seen and owned underlies the meaning of glorification.[2] In the effort to consider the meaning of glory and glorification we find ourselves in the heart of the Gospel. The glory of Christ is the glory of Sonship; and the glory of Sonship is the glorification of the Father; and the glorification of the Father is the glorification of His Fatherly love for the Son and through the Son for the world. The glorification of the Father and His love is the manifestation of that eternal love before the eyes of men and of angels. The love of the Father in the gift and the suffering and death of His beloved Son is to be <u>seen</u> and acknowledged by the world.[3]

Milligan pointed out this important distinction between our Lord's Resurrection-Ascension and His Glorification: the Resurrection-Ascension has taken place, and the Son in His risen, ascended state is in glory at the right hand of the Father, but His Glorification has not yet been completed; He is the Lord of glory, but that glory has yet to be "owned and adored by an assembled universe".

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1. W. Milligan and W. Moulton, <u>The Gospel of St. John</u>, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1880, p. 8.
2. Milligan, <u>The Resurrection of Our Lord</u>, p. 246.
3. Ibid. p. 27; also Milligan, <u>The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord</u>, p. 37.

William Milligan, in a proper use of the evidences, had set forth the central Fact -- the Lord Jesus Christ, as He is now, in His incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended state, in glory at the right hand of the Father. He saw that but one thing was lacking -- the final unveiling of that glory to an acknowledging universe.

In the next chapter the attempt will be made to show how Milligan sought, through the guidance of the Spirit of truth, to glorify the Father by setting forth the mind and body of the Son, in such a way as to point to the Apocalypse.

CHAPTER VI

THE GLORIFICATION OF GOD

A. The Basis for a Theology

William Milligan did not write a systematic theology, but the material for it was at hand. His work had been truly inductive. He had dug, and dug deep, in the mine of the written Word.

1. Grounded in the Fact

Guided by the Spirit of Truth testifying through the written words to the incarnate Word, William Milligan had been enabled to discern within the circle of evidence a central focus -- the Fact of the risen, ascended Lord in His state of glory at the Father's right hand. Jesus Christ, as He now is, was the vision to which Milligan ever strove to be obedient in the writing of his theological works.

2. Centred in Christ as He is Now

Jesus Christ as He is now is the One into whom the evidence of Scripture converges and from whom the meaning of God's being and action is apprehended. It is not that the events of the Incarnation and Crucifixion are not equally important in the divine economy; it is only that these events are best understood in the light of the risen, ascended state of Jesus Christ. In Him as He is now the whole revelation of God comes most clearly into focus:

> "Nor is it any disparagement to the death of Christ to speak thus. That death is in reality the foundation of the whole Christian system, and it was not because the Resurrection was more important in itself that it received its prominence. We have to recall to mind the circumstances of the time. Men had not yet learned, like us, to glory in

> the cross of Christ. It was the main difficulty in their way. To the Jew it was a stumbling block, and to the Greek foolishness. The Resurrection dissipated the shame, and threw light on what was otherwise unintelligible. From the Exaltation, therefore, men were to reason back to the Humiliation, and in the Christ risen were to understand the Christ crucified."[1]

What happened in the past for our salvation retains its own necessity and importance, but it is only in relation to the present state of reality, revealed in the risen, ascended condition of our Lord, that that event can be rightly known. Indeed, it is only by looking to the incarnate, risen, ascended Christ that the incarnate, crucified Christ is truly apprehended. It is not so much that we are first to look to the risen Christ and then, after that, turn to the temporally prior event of the crucifixion in order to judge and to be judged; rather, by looking to the risen, ascended Christ in His state of glory we see also the scars of crucifixion on Him; and still looking at the Lord of Glory we see also the crucified Lord. It is in this light that we most truly view the crucifixion when we read about it in Scripture.

3. Induction Justified, even Appearances Saved

In coming to focus his attention on the present risen Lord, William Milligan not only saw his Salvation but, incidentally, he also beheld the justification of the induction. No longer was Milligan to drag in a so-called principle of causality discovered within his mind by introspection and required for the buttressing of the New Testament revelation. In looking to Jesus as He now is

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1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905, p. 68.

he had found -- rather, he had been found by -- the Lord who controls all events and bends them into His redemptive purpose. No longer was there any need to look away or to look back or to look forward. In beholding the risen, ascended Lord, Milligan beheld Him who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

In the Word become a particular, and in the assumption of that particular into a vital, eternal relationship to the Word, all other particulars and contingencies have their proper grounding, rationality, and meaning. But this particular -- unlike all other particulars -- having come into existence and having been raised to its present state, remains as it is, actively, dynamically controlling all other happenings. Less abstractly, the risen, exalted Lord is the One before whose face all events come to pass in a way that "makes sense"; even the appearances are "saved".

Instead of searching for a temporally prior cause of every effect, in place of looking away from a present "effect" to a rightly determined causal series for its explanation, "we see Jesus" in an immediate iconic configuration within which all events are viewed as being summed up.

William Milligan, in looking to the fact of the Resurrection, saw that it

> "harmonises all the other facts of His history...all else that is made known to us regarding Him falls into harmony and order. The light shed into the tomb when the stone was rolled away becomes an emblem of that light which is reflected along His whole previous life, with its mingled elements of greater than human grandeur, and yet greater than human sorrow. We can understand the miraculous conception, the God manifest in the flesh, the miracles of Divine power and love, the teaching whose depth of meaning

> all the centuries that have passed since then have not been able to exhaust. We can understand also, the sufferings so much greater than those of ordinary men, -- the sorrow of which it was said, 'Was ever sorrow like unto my sorrow?' With the Resurrection of our Lord everything else that has been revealed of Him assumes proportion, order, harmony; without it all is mystery, -- a lock without a key, a labyrinth without a clue, a beginning without a corresponding end."[1]

It is the writer's opinion that Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, as previously indicated (Appendix, Note III), had made this same discovery. Through his deep reading of the Bible, he had been led to see that by the incarnation and resurrection God had shown that nature -- i.e. creation -- contained depths, ready to be revealed to its patient and probing interpreter. The clue to nature's labyrinth, the key to the lock, had been exposed in the resurrection. In the risen Lord Jesus there is manifested the mystery of the unity and harmony of all things. True unity is found in the unity of the Trinity, the unity of the person of the God-man, the unity of Christ and His Church, and the unity of the whole creation. Genuine induction had been uncovered and justified; and man, by interpreting nature through an inductive commerce with the true forms of nature, submits his mind to be conformed to the mind of Christ, who is Lord of nature. Because the form, the Word of God, inheres even now in the risen Christ, one can know that the real forms, or dynamic laws, of existence are to be found, not in abstraction from nature, but inherent in nature. As man through the method of induction proceeds in this work -- under the dominion of Christ -- so he is enabled to recover in actuality his lost dominion over nature. Bacon, to be understood, must be

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1. Ibid. pp. 71, 72.

understood as a Christian. In the same way, only the Christian has the clue to the labyrinth of creation. Milligan's work pointed to this same truth.

4. The Need of a Constant Looking to Jesus

Not only must we look to Jesus as He now is in order to have the proper theological perspective but also, for the very reason that our Lord, as He now is, continues contemporary with us, we must look continuously to Him; for once we look away we sink back to the old level (though even then He holds us in His love), and back to an eccentric viewpoint. From time to time in his writings William Milligan emphasised this very point.

> "One thing only has to be kept steadily in view. Throughout these verses [I Cor. 15] the Apostle never takes his eye off the risen Christ."[1]
>
> "The difference is vast between acknowledging that a thing is true, and seeing that truth stand out before our eyes in the clearness of deep and deliberate conviction...Would we know the power of any truth that we have believed, we need to be constantly returning to it, constantly renewing our acquaintance with it, constantly satisfying ourselves, amidst all the fresh experiences that we make, of its reality and value."[2]

Reference to the function and place of the Holy Spirit in Milligan's theology has yet to be made; but it is well to note here that our looking to Jesus, though it is something we must will to do, does not come about apart from the present and continuing power and testimony of the Holy Spirit, whose very function is to refer us to Jesus Christ. It was when John was "in the Spirit" that

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1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of the Dead, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1894, p. 58.
2. Ibid. pp. 7, 8.

the Lord was revealed to him.

Referring to the Apocalypse, Milligan wrote: "The Seer has constantly before him the risen and glorified Redeemer..."[1]

A similar remark regarding William Milligan himself was to be made by one who had been his close friend and collaborator, William F. Moulton:

> "It would hardly be too much to say that a single chapter of the Apocalypse [Chapter One] contains in germ and suggestion most of the topics on which he ever wrote."[2]

What Milligan had to say about the Apostle Paul will serve to direct the attention to the central theological object and to set the tone for what is to follow:

> "His appeal has been to fact and to fact alone. His reasoning on the subject, the light that he is to cast upon the fact when it has its place assigned it in God's eternal and universal plan, is still to come. In the meantime his one cry has been, Behold the fact, Christ is risen."[3]

5. The Challenge to Look to Jesus, to Jesus Christ Clothed in His Gospel

Let us then re-direct our attention to Jesus Christ as He now is in glory, for there we behold the One out of whom William Milligan unfolded his theology. What can be said of that Object? The vision of the Lord in glory prostrates us, and were it not for His word calming our fears we should not have the courage to look again; but when in faith we do so, we know that we are beholding a Man who is qualified to pronounce the great I AM. We see Him who is the first

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1. W. Milligan, Discussions on the Apocalypse, Macmillan, London, 1893, p. 215.
2. W.F. Moulton, "In Memoriam, The Rev. William Milligan, D.D.", The Expository Times, Vol. V, Oct. 1893 - Sept., 1894, p. 249.
3. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of the Dead, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1894, pp. 38, 39.

and the last. We see the living one who died and, lo, He is alive for evermore, and He has the keys of death and hades. We know these things are so because we have His Word.

What must be borne in mind at this juncture is that when we look to the risen, ascended Lord we are not to behold Him isolated from his history, cut off from an organic relationship to the rest of the divine economy. We are to behold the whole Christ with all His history, and we are enabled to do this to the extent that the eyes of faith focus on Christ as He is now. When the risen Lord through His word enables us to see and hear Him, any partial or fragmentary view we might previously have had of Him is now beheld as fitly framed within the fuller perspective.[1]

B. The Relationship Between the Son and the Father

1. Seeing Jesus in Relationship

When we see Christ by faith we behold Him in relationship. We see the Son; and in seeing the Son we behold the Father. In an analysis of the relationship between the Son and the Father, Milligan set forth what is essential to his Biblical theology. That analysis is contained in an exposition of John 5.10-20. But before turning to the passage itself we are to remember that the whole New Testament was written in the light of the resurrection and ascension. Events which occurred and words which were spoken before Christ's death were then recalled by the Risen-Crucified Lord and, after the ascension, by the Holy Spirit who not only brought them to remembrance but also interpreted them.

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1. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, pp. 37, 38.

> "Ver. 22 of John 2. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, 'Destroy this body, and in three days I will raise it up'. We... are told that the words which baffled the Jews were mysterious to the disciples likewise. Whilst, however, the Jews rejected the'hard saying', the disciples 'kept all these things in 'their heart', not understanding them until the prophecy was fulfilled...And they believed the Scripture and the words which Jesus had said -- The recollection led the disciples (we cannot doubt that John is speaking fully of his own experience) to a fuller and richer faith in 'the Scripture' and 'the word' of Jesus...The disciples, guided to deeper faith by that which was at the time wholly mysterious (and which was a 'stone of stumbling' to those who believed), recognised the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy and of the prediction of Jesus Himself in the death and resurrection of their Lord. Thus in the first scene of His public ministry we have Jesus before us in the light in which the whole Gospel is to present Him, at once the crucified and the risen Lord."[1]

It was in the context of the crucified and risen Lord that Milligan read John 5.10-20, the passage about the healing of an impotent man on the Sabbath:

> "But here we pass at once into the most intimate depths of the Divine nature, into the most remote recesses of the Divine plan. The Almighty and His whole method of working; death, judgment, and eternity; the ground of our responsibility; the secret source of the acceptance or rejection of the Gospel by mankind; all these great truths, involving the most perplexing questions to which we can turn our thoughts, are at once brought up."[2]

We will learn that Milligan followed the Apostle in all these points, but we consider now his interpretation of St. John's presentation of the relationship between the Father and the Son.

2. A Present, Active Relationship

The relationship between the Father and the Son is constantly,

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1. W. Milligan and W. Moulton, The Gospel According to John, A Popular Commentary, Vol. II, ed. P. Schaff, Edinburgh, 1880, pp. 26, 27.
2. W. Milligan, "Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda", The Homiletic Quarterly, Vol. II, London, 1878, p. 377.

uninterruptedly active in the present moment. Milligan locates the fundamental truth of the fifth chapter of John in the seventeenth verse, "My Father worketh until now, and I work". The Jews had come to interpret God's rest after the creation as a cessation of work; accordingly His commemoration of the work of creation by the appointment of the seventh day as a day of rest had come to be interpreted as an order to stop all work on the Sabbath. But this was a misinterpretation, for the deeper, underlying principle is that God works even now. Milligan did not understand this as a continuous creation but as an upholding of what had been created. The rest of God's people on the Sabbath was for the purpose of turning from their distractions to meditate on the living, active God and to follow Him in His redemptive work, from which He never pauses. His works of providence are subsumed under His over-arching purpose of redemption. All history is made to serve God's redemptive purpose, and there is no break in the working out of that purpose.[1] Jesus claimed that this God is His Father and that He, the Son, works also.

> "'I also work'. As my Father works continuously so do I. As my Father knows no rest on the Sabbath I also know none. With me as with Him, work is rest and rest is work."[2]

This relationship of constant activity, was maintained, of course, in the risen, ascended Christ, in glory at God's right hand.

> "Sitting at the right hand of God...is not an attitude of the glorified Lord, nor does it imply rest in his exalted state. It is consistent with the idea of constant uninterrupted activity, and in such active exertions the whole revelation of

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1. Ibid. pp. 377, 378.
2. Ibid. p. 378.

the New Testament tells us that our Lord is now engaged."[1]

Indeed, as we have seen, it is only in knowing by faith the risen, ascended Lord that we are enabled to look with the Apostle John to the works, and listen with him to the words, of the incarnate pre-resurrection Christ. We turn back, then, to Milligan's comments on John 5:18, 19, as these verses bear on the relationship of the Son to the Father.

> "The Jews at once apprehended the meaning of the argument. They 'sought the more to kill Him', we are told, 'because He not only broke the Sabbath, but called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God'. Therefore the truth must be urged upon them in still plainer and more emphatic words; and this is done in ver. 19: 'Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, Verily, I say unto you, the Son can of Himself do nothing save what He seeth the Father doing, for what things soever He doeth, these things the Son also doeth in like manner'. In these words, then, together with those of the seventeenth verse, we have the first great truth contained in the discourse before us, stated in its most direct and absolute form. It refers to the nature of the relationship existing between the Father and the Son; and, in pointing out to us what that is, the words of Jesus lead us to the most fundamental doctrine of all religion and the most distinguishing characteristic of the Christian faith."[2]

3. A Metaphysical and Essential Relationship

If for any reason we might have supposed that the effect of the teachings of those who had been influenced by Schleiermacher was such that William Milligan came to view Christ as merely the realised ideal of humanity, what he has written should disabuse us of such a supposition. Milligan viewed the Son's relation to Father as being not only moral but also "metaphysical and essential". The

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1. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1901, p. 59.
2. Milligan, "Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda", op.cit. p. 378.

relationship is not just as the Son of Man, as a human being, is rightly related to the Father, obeying His law, submitting to His will in every area of thought and deed. It was and is all of this, but much more. Otherwise there would have been a failure in Jesus' words to emphasise what he previously asserted regarding His equality with the Father. The relationship of equality does not rest on the discipline of His will in being morally subject to the will of the Father, by doing that will and not His own. Rather, His inability to do anything of Himself except what He sees the Father doing resides in an essential necessity of His being, due to the very relation in which he stands to God. The very word "for", at the beginning of the last clause of the nineteenth verse, witnesses to this relationship -- "whatever he does, that the Son does likewise."[1]

Here we are able to see how Milligan, though undoubtedly learning from, and making the most of, the theological tradition he inherited and mastered, nevertheless sought and found through the Scriptures the grounding of that theology.

4. A Relationship of Father and Son

Milligan found in the fifth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John that God is described as something more than a merely metaphysical Being; and in the words that follow we are able to detect an implied criticism of the definition of God in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

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1. Ibid. p. 378.

> "This relationship is here further described as that of Father and Son. God is not spoken of in His absolute existence only as a Being, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, having no part of illimitable space and no moment of illimitable time unfilled with His presence. He is distinctly spoken of as the Father, possessed with all those attributes and affections which we associate with that word."[1]

The definition of God found in the Westminster Confession of Faith seems to have been controlled from behind by metaphysical categories that have resisted a truly Scriptural shaping. Here is an instance, and a very important one indeed, when it seems that the Aristotelian character of Medieval theology had been imported by Protestant Scholasticism in its reliance on natural theology as a base for all theology. The negative way of definition had gained the upper hand and God was transformed from the truly fatherly and truly filial into a Being without passions and outwith time and space altogether.

Milligan's reading of Scripture had led him to see that this God of scholasticism was remote from the God of the Bible. From what he wrote above, it can be discerned that God had been exiled from an existence in space and time. Whether Milligan for this reason was led to criticise the Newtonian concepts of absolute time and space is doubtful, but he could well have questioned any theory of natural science that might be used to separate God from His world. At any rate he was critical of a theology that excluded God from participation in the space and time of the world and that would rob God of His inherently fatherly attributes and affections. In his exegesis of the fifth chapter of John he exhibits his deep regard

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1. Ibid. pp. 378, 379.

for the specific words of Scripture and their underlying ideas. For Milligan fatherhood implied sonship. He recognised that the words "father" and "son" are used metaphorically and that what is signified by the use of the word "father" in relation to God differs from what it signifies in relation to men; but he believed that the words "father" and "son" expressed something that cannot be expressed without their use -- that in the heart of God there is a truly fatherly element and in the heart of Jesus there is a truly filial element. No other words can express these characteristics. Only 'father' and 'son' can do this.

Milligan did not regard these words as merely anthropomorphisms, but believed them to refer to the essential, eternal character of God. God in Himself is not only infinite in His power and perfect in His wisdom but also fatherly in His affection and rule. God is that Being in whom the word 'father' has its archetype. God is Father on His side -- inherently, eternally. If so, then He has never been alone; and the Scriptures reveal Him as more than One in His Godhead and thereby testify to the eternal, essential distinctions with the Godhead. God is one who "objectivizes Himself, contemplates Himself, holds communion with Himself, in one who is 'the radiance of His glory and the express image of His existence'."[1]

But the fatherliness of God, being just as essential in the Godhead as sovereign power, testifies to the equally essential filiation within the Godhead. Therefore, "the radiance of His glory

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1. Ibid. p. 379.

and the express image of His existence" whom the Father beholds is called the Son. Thus the Son is God Himself not without passion or motion but the acting, feeling, living God. Jesus claims to be that very Son. The Son has become flesh and dwells among us without ceasing to be the Word who was in the beginning with God and was God. Those whose eyes were opened were enabled to see in Jesus the glory of the only-begotten of the Father.[1]

Here again we are impressed with the fact that Milligan's idealism, being Scripturally grounded, served as a critical weapon against any attempt to mythologise the content of Scripture and, being anchored in the Incarnation, did not lend itself to be used as an "ideal" construct of the ego.

Another portion of Scripture to which Milligan especially referred, because of the light it throws on the relationship of the Son and the Father, was John 1.18. Milligan read this verse as follows: "No one hath seen God at any time; the one who is only begotten God, he that is in the bosom of the Father, he declared him." We will notice that the word 'God' replaced the word 'Son'.

Milligan believed that if this reading, μονογενὴς θεός, were accepted, as he thought it should be, and it were allowed to do its work in the Church, it would lead to Christological results of great value, especially in regard to the doctrine of the Trinity as it usually is presented in the Church's teaching. Rather than alter the substance of that teaching the use of the slightly different form based on the insight given by the more correct reading would

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1. Ibid. p. 379; see Appendix, Note XI.

ease some pressure felt by quite a few thoughtful men and clarify the expression of this fundamental dogma. The reading "...would force upon us a distinction in one way or another between divinity as in the Father absolutely the fountainhead and remote source of all divinity, and in divinity as in the Son, in whom it is the necessary effluence of that Being to whom we give in its highest sense the name of God."[1] Such a teaching would be in conformity with that of Hebrews 1:3, where the Son is called "the effulgence of God's glory and the express image of His substance". This description enables us to think of Jesus as God of God, co-eternal with the Father, divine in essence, but not exactly in the same way as the Father, not in time or eternity but rather in the order of thought.[2]

The New Testament Revision Company, of which Milligan was a member, had rejected this reading but Milligan thought that its reading brought out three points on which he invited his readers to dwell:

> "(1) That the Son is 'only begotten'; (2) That He is 'God'; (3) That He is 'in the bosom of the Father'. There is an evident climax in the three thoughts which, taken along with the fact that they are three, is a strong argument, according to the structural principles of St. John's style, in favour of our position."[3]

Such an interpretation of "only begotten God" enabled Milligan to see in the Son one who is more than "only begotten" and more than "God". Being "in the bosom of the Father, He reveals God as Father; without the Son who is in His bosom He can be revealed only as God.

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1. W. Milligan, "The Revised Version of the New Testament", The Christian Church, Vol. I, S. Partridge & Co., London, 1881.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

This reading reveals more than "with God" in verse one, more than the communion of God with God. Included in this reading is the fatherly element, love; out of that love (or grace and truth) the Son comes and into it He returns. Thus it is revealed that the very essence of God is this procession and return of love -- from all eternity, into time, and into all eternity. It is as much the essence of the Son to move in this way as it inheres in His nature to be the "only begotten" or to be "God". In this essential characteristic the Son is qualified to reveal the Father, whom to know as thus set forth in Christ Jesus is "eternal life".[1]

We should note at this point that the time-eternity dialectic, even in the midst of Milligan's thinking in regard to the relation of the incarnate Son to the Father, is still maintained by him. Although Milligan insists that God in His Son enters time and space as an active Presence, it seems that he had allowed the Newtonian conceptions of space and time to foreclose any idea that the very incarnation of the Word must entail an alteration in the nature of time and space. Though Milligan laid much emphasis on, and helped the Church to view anew, the humanity of the risen Christ, he apparently was unaware that a risen humanity must, in order to remain truly human, have its own special place and time. Milligan helped to make room for this "third dimension" without actually making the distinction.[2]

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1. W. Milligan and W. Moulton, The Gospel of St. John, in A Popular Commentary on the Gospel of St. John and on the Acts of the Apostles, ed. P. Schaff, Vol. II, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1880, p. 10.

2. See T.F. Torrance, Space, Time and Incarnation, Oxford U. Press. London, 1969.

5. A Relationship of Ideal to Actual

In the consideration of the relationship between the Father and the Son we are most surely introduced in depth to William Milligan's idealism. We must ascertain what kind of idealism it is, for we will continue to confront it throughout the remainder of this chapter. What we learn of Milligan's utilisation of idealism in his analysis of the relationship between the Father and the Son should set the tone for its use in other contexts. What we should see is that Milligan adopted an idealism which he sincerely believed was used by the Apostle John and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is a fulfilled idealism, or a realism of the new creation in Christ. The works that Christ did glorified the Father and pointed to the salvation to be accomplished in him, who is the glory of the Father.

In regard to John 5:17, 19b ("The Father worketh until now; I also work" and "What things soever the Father doeth, these things the Son also doeth in like manner".), Milligan wished to note two things. In the first place, the "works" referred to are more than acts of superhuman power that lead us to see in them the special presence of God. These acts become "works" due to their expressing a certain moral life and character. In the second place, one is not to think that the works are done first by the Father and then by the Son. The whole context of the passages lead us to see this in a different way. Especially do the words of verses 20, 30, and 36 aid us here: "The Father showeth the Son all things that Himself doeth"; "I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear I judge", "The works which the

Father hath given me to accomplish, the same works that I do bear witness to me that the Father has sent me". Only the Son has seen the Father's works; only the Son has heard the Father's words. The purpose of the Father's sending the Son was that the Son should give actual shape to the Father's works among men, make them real before men's eyes and in their hearing. What the Father does and what the Son does are not two different workings nor are they the working of the same thing twice.

> "They are related to each other as the ideal to the phenomenal, as the thought to the word, as the inner purpose of the soul to the execution of the purpose. The Father does not work actually; he works always through the Son. The Son does not work ideally; He works always from the Father. But God is always working; and the works of the Son are the works of the Father."[1]

The idealism which Milligan believed he found in the writings of John was ideally suited to exhibit a present, eternal relationship of the Son to the Father. The works that Jesus did were more than evidences of power; they glorified the Son, who declared the Father. As we have seen, the transition from a testimony of the power and providence of God to His glorification as Father takes place in the person of the Son. Therein fatherly love is exhibited and received. In this light it is possible to understand that the entire life of Jesus is led, and that everything he does is done, in order to the revealing of the Father to man. Only as we know God as Father can we worship and serve Him aright. He is more than unbendable justice and almighty power; love and peace and joy do not reside in these

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1. W. Milligan, "Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda", The Homiletic Quarterly, Vol. II, London, 1878, pp. 379, 380.

attributes, as do reverence and awe. What is missing is fatherhood, for only there do we find authority controlled by love.

The personal relationship belongs neither to creation nor to providence; only the Father and the Son can give that. The only way for us to come to know that fatherly and filial relationship is by perceiving it through coming in contact with the Son, who, in all He does, declares the Father. The "works" of the Son are not only deeds of power, but they are deeds of love, tenderness, and compassion, reflecting a father's loving rule of his family.[1]

It may be questioned whether Milligan was correct in claiming that he found the ideal-actual, or ideal-phenomenal, distinction in John's gospel. So specific a distinction might well be an imposition on the Scriptures and hardly necessary to a right understanding of the relationship between the Father and the Son. It may even betray a metaphysical "prior-understanding" that kept Milligan from drawing out further than he did, the implications of the third dimensionality of Christ's risen humanity.

6. A Relationship Grounded in Love

The relationship between the Father and the Son is a present, active relationship; but only love is a genuinely present thing, for only love exhibits the eternal and essential reality of God. Love is a relationship and is made known at its highest and widest and deepest in the relationship between the Father and the Son. The

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1. Ibid. p. 380.

merely evidential, with its temporal reference to a prior event or to a future event, can never exhibit in itself the present, eternal relationship of love. Only Jesus when seen and heard as the Son can show us and teach us what love is, for He reveals His relationship to the Father.

> "The ground of this relationship is love. This is contained in ver. 20: 'For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth'. Let us mark the present tenses of these verbs, 'loveth', 'showeth'. They are used in a sense that we often forget, and by forgetting which we lose the force of not a few passages of Scripture. That which they express is not simply present time, as if Jesus would say, The Father loveth the Son at this moment, and showeth Him at this moment all things that Himself doeth, They express what is absolute, what is essential to the person spoken of, what he always is or does."[1]

Milligan performs a helpful service in eliciting the meaning of the present tense of the words of this passage (John 5:20) and of other Scriptural passages, for he thus gives a more than temporal grounding to the revealing and loving work of God. Because God loves He shows, and His love is not just a moment to moment affair but is as steady as eternity. God is love. But here, again, does not the time-eternity dyad lend itself to an "existentialistic" interpretation; as though one must continually attempt to realise for himself the eternity that resides in every moment of time? However, as Milligan was to learn, the proper antidote to this desperate attempt to live in the present is to be found in the risen humanity of Christ as communicated by the Holy Spirit.

What Milligan did insist upon in regard to the love of God was that this love is not a mere attribute to be viewed on the same level

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1. Ibid. p. 380.

as other characteristics of God. God's love is much more than just one of His attributes. It is His medium, the very sphere in which He lives. It is the essence of the fellowship between the Father and the Son. Within this fellowship the Father shows the Son all He does. Milligan views this revelation as the basic truth of the whole teaching of Jesus at the pool of Bethesda.[1]

Who then would deny that the essence of God is love and that this love is the fellowship between the Father and the Son communicated through the Spirit? It was this recognition of love's Trinitarian grounding that prevented Milligan from falling into the error of hypostatising love with the declaration that love is God.

7. The Trinity and the Incarnation

For Milligan the love of the Father for the Son and of the Son for the Father is an expression of the dynamic union between the two which is effected by and in the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity. However, as we have learned, we are not, indeed, we cannot (except faultily) think of the Trinity apart from the incarnate Son. Rather, it is only through the humanity of Christ, of the risen, ascended Son, that we come to know of the eternal Trinity. We are able, in a way, to abstract from the incarnate Son and think of the Son and the Father and the Holy Spirit as they were prior to the actual Incarnation, but we would not be able to think of them at all had it not been for the Fact of the Incarnate, risen, ascended Lord.

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1. Ibid. p. 380.

Lest we should think that Milligan's theology is no more than a mere extrapolation from Scripture passages, let us consider what he had to say about the relationship between the Trinity and the Incarnation, the interpenetration of the two natures of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Incarnate Son. Scripture shows that

> "Our Lord, even during His earthly life, was animated and pervaded by the Spirit of God. Not that the Holy Spirit thus dwelling in Him took the place of His Divinity. The union of the Divine Son with the Divine Father could never be interrupted, whatever the self-limitations which the former, in becoming man, might, not apart from His Divinity but in the power of His Divinity, impose upon Himself. As from everlasting ages of the past, so through all the ages as they run their course, and to the everlasting ages of the future, the three Persons of the Trinity must, while no doubt to be thought of separately, form such a unity that they shall be more than beside, that they shall be in each other, and that no one of them can ever have a place assigned to Him out of the Hypostatic union, in which some other existence might occupy the sphere He is supposed to have resigned. When, therefore, the Second Person of the Trinity took flesh and dwelt among us, He was not less in the Father than before, and at that great epoch the Holy Spirit was not less than formerly in both the Father and the Son. The Son did not by His Incarnation forfeit that Divine Hypostasis which He had always been, nor could He then receive what He had eternally possessed. He rather filled the manhood which He assumed with the power of the Divinity which He retained; and thus filled it at the same time with the Spirit which dwelt in that Divinity."[1]

The human nature and the divine nature in Christ are distinct in a manner similar to the distinction between the Father and the Son in the Trinity. As in the Trinity the relationship between the two natures in the hypostatic union is not that of a standing side by side, as parallel lines, but that of mutual impenetration, the union being

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1. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, Macmillan, 1901, pp. 176, 177.

effected by the Holy Spirit.[1]

If William Milligan, following in the main the orthodox Chalcedonian formula, was able to describe the Trinity and the Incarnation and the two natures in this way, it was because he had seen it all to be most emphatically true in the sphere of the incarnate, risen, ascended Lord, for it is in Him as He is now that the interpenetration of His two natures within the unity of His Person was and is most notable. And, as we have already seen, the Scriptural portrait of our Lord as He was before His death and resurrection is controlled by the Risen Crucified. Just as the Spirit penetrates the Son in the eternal Trinity so does the Spirit penetrate the humanity of the Son incarnate both before and after the Resurrection-Ascension. The difference between the first and second states of the incarnate One is that in the latter the Spirit reigns without hindrance. The humanity in heaven continues as before but, if possible, we must think of the mutual penetration, through the Spirit, of the human and divine natures as being even more pronounced.[2]

> "The Holy Spirit had so penetrated and pervaded the human nature of the exalted Lord that He could be spoken of as 'The Spirit of Jesus'."[3]

There is one point in Milligan's thought on the doctrine of the Incarnation that requires a comment. We will have noticed how the Lutheran emphasis on the communicatio idiomatum preponderates over

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1. Ibid. p. 177.
2. Ibid. pp. 177, 178.
3. Ibid. p. 179.

the idea of distinction between the two natures of Christ. The distinction is admitted, but the communion and interpenetration of the two natures within the one Person of Christ receive by far the greater stress, and there is no hint of a need to preserve the truth of an extra-Calvinisticum. It must be acknowledged, however, that heavy as was Milligan's accent on the interpenetration of the two natures he never allowed this to lead him to assert the ubiquity of Christ's glorified body; in fact, he denied it.[1]

For Milligan the emphasis on the interpenetration of the two natures gave weight to the idea that there was a close pre-incarnational kinship between them. Here there is a belief that makes it easier to affirm -- as Milligan did -- that there is a "spark" of the Divine in every human soul. If we detect in this what might appear to be a little Platonism or neo-Platonism we must not presume that Milligan was unaware of it. He perhaps would have permitted this designation -- just as Tholuck and Neander and Müller admitted it -- but he would have insisted that regardless of its denomination it is found in Scripture and that Scripture should be the standard of judgment.[2]

Milligan's belief that there is a portion of the Divine in every human soul might well have been "sparked" not only by the influence of the idealism he had found in Wyclif's writings but also by the pervading atmosphere of German idealism with which he would have come into contact while in Germany and by a continued

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1. Ibid. p. 25.

2. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, pp. 36, 37; The Resurrection of the Dead, p. 104; See also Appendix, Note XII.

reading of German, Lutheran theology. Such had been the emphasis on the communication of the natures, that the permeation of Christ's human nature by the Divine nature gradually was transferred to human nature per se. Thus humanity itself, apart from any link with the humanity of Christ, came to be regarded as Divine.

C. The Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord

> "The Ascended and Glorified Lord is in Heaven. In what light are we mainly to regard Him, and what is the most essential characteristic of the work in which He is there engaged?"[1]

It is possible to be convinced that our Lord has been raised from the dead, has ascended to heaven, and is at the right hand of God, without our having any idea of what He is doing there. But when we know that the resurrection-ascension is not merely a past event but also a present active state, then it is only expected that we would want to know just what our Lord is doing now. Most Christians can testify to a vagueness in their minds concerning this question. It is to Milligan's enduring credit that he has given an answer which helps to dispel the vagueness. In attending to it we acquire a clarity in regard to what our Lord is doing and are enabled to know what the Church should be doing, for the Church is His body.

1. The Heavenly High Priest

In the Person of the risen Son are contained all the offices through which He ministers and leads His people. We are not to look away from Christ to find outside Him some one who acts in His place, apart from Him.

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1. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, p. 61.

> "In the unity of His Person is found every function needed for the guidance of His people through the different stages of their moral pilgrimage; in Him they have a Redeemer 'mighty to save'. What He laboured and died to purchase, He rose to complete, and is now living to bestow."[1]

In looking to the risen Son we are able to see in Him Priest, King, and Prophet. According to Milligan there should be no question as to which office of the three has the pre-eminence. The chief purpose of Christ's coming should determine the office that is distinguished beyond the other two. That purpose was to effect reunion between God and man, opening up a way by which sinners may be brought home to their holy, heavenly Father. To bring about such a purpose is especially the office of a priest. The prophetical office is fulfilled through instruction regarding Him in whom we are to believe; through the kingly office comes the command "Believe". But believing and obeying have as their object the whole Christ. The Lord in His priestly character must be set before the eyes of those who are being called to believe in Him; and as the Christian progresses on his pilgrimage Christ as priest should become for him more and more central. As we shall learn, Milligan showed how relevant the office of Christ's priesthood is for the life, mission and worship of the Church, His Body. Christ is, of course, in relation to all men by creation and in some way by redemption but especially in His priesthood is He related to those who have "closed with Him".[2]

It was just in this area of Christ's priesthood that Milligan

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1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, p. 152.
2. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord, pp. 61, 62.

believed the Church's knowledge to be sadly lacking. "Christ is King, yes; His kingly rights are to be upheld at any cost. Christ is prophet, yes; His Word must be proclaimed. But Christ is priest? Is not this rather the peculiar teaching of Rome and other sacerdotalists?" Such generally was the attitude of Church members.

> "But Christians are what they are by being in Christ as their Priest, by whom they draw near to God, and in whom the chief end of their being is accomplished. Knowledge of Him in that office thus precedes their full experience of Him in the offices discharged by Him on their behalf. In the order of thought our Lord is priest in heaven before He is Prophet or King. His prophetical and kingly offices are but the further issues of what He accomplishes as Priest."[1]

Milligan found confirmation in Scripture for the pre-eminence of the priestly office, in the Old as well as in the New Testament. In the latter the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Revelation of St. John are especially noteworthy. As to the former:

> "There can be no doubt...that the idea of the priesthood was the leading, forming, and controlling idea of the Old Testament dispensation."[2]

2. Time when the Priesthood of Our Lord Began

Milligan, in facing the question as to the time when the priesthood of Christ began, was confronted with two commonly held answers. Some held that His priesthood began at His glorification; others believed that it began at the cross, for there our Lord was not only victim but priest. Each view contains an essential truth. Which is right?

Milligan found the resolution to the problem in a verse from

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1. Ibid. pp. 62, 63.
2. Ibid. p.65.

Scripture, John 12.32.

> "...it is our Lord Himself who, in the words of His recorded by the Fourth Evangelist, supplies the answer. In a text... which must be translated otherwise than either in the authorised or the Revised Version, the beloved disciple gives the words of his Divine Master as follows: 'And I, if I be lifted up on high out of the earth, will draw all men unto Myself'. The translation 'lifted up', is too weak for the original, which ought to be rendered 'lifted up on high'; and the preposition employed is not to be translated 'from', but (with the margin of the Revised Version) 'out of'. So given, the words of Jesus can have but one meaning, this His Glorification begins not with the Resurrection but with the Crucifixion. This is indeed one of the lessons of the fourth Gospel to be learned both from individual texts and from its general structure. The 'glory' so often spoken of there includes not only that of the Resurrection but of the supreme act of love manifested on the Cross; while the structure of the book demands that the facts of the Crucifixion and Resurrection be considered as one whole. The dying Redeemer is glorified through death: the glorified Redeemer died that He might, in the path of death, find glory."[1]

We will recall that Milligan previously had opposed this view. In a letter to The Journal of Sacred Literature and Biblical Record in 1857 he had recorded his opposition to William Tait of Rugby, who had written in favour of the translation "out of death" in place of "from death" in Hebrews 5:7. This is an example of how a change in the conception of the primary Object of Scripture will affect one's reading of the Scripture, down to a little word like ἐκ .

If our Lord's death was the beginning of His glory and if His super-earthly priesthood began with the sacrifice on the cross, then His whole life on earth was a preparation for His priestly work.

3. Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek

What is the type of priestly work in which our Lord is now

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1. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord, pp. 78, 79.

engaged in heaven? Milligan, following the Epistle to the Hebrews, sees that priesthood as after the order of Melchizedek, who was a copy of the original.

Milligan realised that the reasoning of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews rested upon the two passages that mention Melchizedek -- Gen. 14.18-20 and Psalm 100.4. The writer of the Epistle had before him one chief purpose -- not only to show that the priesthood of Melchizedek was superior to that of Aaron, but to elicit its contrasting and individual nature, which foreshadowed the coming of the great High-priesthood of Christ. Milligan, following the letter to the Hebrews, interpreted Melchizedek as a type or copy of the archetypal High-priest of the Christian dispensation; and it was to the Melchizedekian order that he pointed for the right understanding of Christ's High-priesthood rather than to the later order of the Levitical priesthood.[1]

Milligan accepted Melchizedek as a truly historical person, but he believed he was simply following the interpretation of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews in seeing in Melchizedek a shadowing forth of the heavenly realm. Melchizedek was a priest-king, pre-Mosaic, free from a this-worldly relationship, spiritual, one, unchangeable, continuous, and royal.[2]

Milligan believed that the pre-Mosaic portion of Scripture was not only an earlier revelation than the Mosaic economy but more truly a Divine order, and wider because of its purpose for all men.

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1. Ibid. pp. 85, 86.
2. Ibid. pp. 87-96.

Here he believed the everlasting principles of the Divine economy are to be found. The later, Mosaic order was limited and adapted to special circumstances, and Christ Himself simply fulfilled the principles of that primary revelation.[1] Such an interpretation of the Old Testament helps to bring to view not only Milligan's idealist slant but the fact that he was more learned in the historical criticism of the New Testament than of the Old.

In referring to the Scriptural words describing Melchizedek as being "without genealogy", Milligan wrote:

> "They transcend sense and time; but by that very circumstance they gain a positive weight. No sooner do we leave sense and time behind us than we are in that sphere of the real which under-lies the phenomenal, of the ideal which the visible only imperfectly expresses. We have entered the region of spiritual and eternal things...Thus the priesthood of Melchizedek, dissociated from the thought of an earthly parentage, and from the beginning and ending of earthly life, belongs to the real and the true which lie behind all we see. It springs out of eternity; to eternity it returns; when it rises before us we have no thought of the boundaries of either space or time."[2]

We have here orthodox Christian Platonism, very similar to that of B.F. Westcott, whom Milligan knew and admired. It is Platonism, but it is also Christian in that it was centred in the Person of Christ. However, just how true to the Object of the Christian faith does this Platonism allow the theologian to be? The dialectic moves back and forth between many contrasting pairs: real-phenomenal, eternal-temporal, spiritual-material, ideal-visible. Granted that such a dualism may be found in some parts of Scripture.

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1. Ibid. pp. 88, 89. See, for a fuller development of this theme, Milligan's The Decalogue and the Lord's Day, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1866.

2. Ibid. pp. 90, 91.

But is this really the genuinely Hebraic-Christian perspective? It is easy to make too much of the Hebrew-Greek contrast, but what we surely must discern in the theology of Milligan is a decided preponderance of the Hellenistic dialectic, which ultimately and savingly is grounded very Hebraistically in the incarnate, risen, ascended Lord. But even here, as we have seen and shall see again, the unfolding of the dimensionality of the position and dynamics of the risen humanity of our Lord is hampered by the continuing contrast between the "eternal" realm He has entered and "the boundaries of ... space or time", which He is believed to have left behind. But has not the risen Lord created His own special space-time dimensional boundaries in which His Church on earth is given to share?

4. Priesthood Founded in the Sonship of Our Lord

Christ was not to be understood in terms of Melchizedek, but Melchizedek was to be understood in terms of Christ, the type in terms of the antitype. Referring to the Epistle to the Hebrews Milligan wrote:

> "...its fundamental ideas pass from our Lord to Melchizedek, and not from Melchizedek to our Lord. Melchizedek illustrates rather than lays down the principles of the line to which he belongs. These in their originality are to be found in the exalted and glorified Lord; ...the heavenly High-priest is what He is personally, not by succession. He is the Son, and this connexion between His Sonship and His heavenly Priesthood is brought out with remarkable force in the Epistle to the Hebrews...The 'purification of sins' was the work which Jesus, in passing on to His exaltation, accomplished; and, He accomplished it as the 'Son' whose eternal pre-existence and glorious position both in creation and providence are described in Heb. 3.1-6. Thus, in the Sonship of our Lord the foundation of His High-priestly work is laid."[1]

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1. Ibid. pp. 97, 98.

Once again we notice William Milligan glorified God in glorifying the Son. He showed how the priesthood of Christ is a function of His Sonship. But in following the Epistle to the Hebrews, he was even more specific, focusing not just on the Incarnate Son as such but more precisely on Christ as He is now -- the incarnate, glorified and exalted Son. As we shall see even more clearly, Milligan's idealism was a realism of the new creation in Christ, the kind of realism he believed he found in Scripture, especially in the writings of the Apostle John and in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Referring to the latter he wrote:

> "No truth appears more clearly upon the face of the whole Epistle than that neither the pre-existent nor the incarnate Sonship of our Lord (although both are proceeded on and implied), but His Sonship in His now glorified condition constitutes Him to be our High-priest. The two conceptions of Son and Priest cannot, in His case, be separated from each other."[1]

It is from the very being of the risen exalted Son that His priesthood functions. We cannot escape from Jesus Christ. All the offices of the ministry are contained in Him. We are to look to Jesus and we see the Mediator. Milligan was not guilty of the attempt, often made in Protestantism, to define the Person of Christ by His works. Such an attempt usually leads to making Christ in the image of one who does those works the "enlightened" believe it possible for a man to do. With Milligan the action of Christ were seen to be a function of His Person. Thus whatever Christ does for His people in His heavenly Priesthood He effects through what He is

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1. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord, p. 99.

as the ascended, glorified Lord. His Person being the union of God and the now perfected humanity, His priestly function is simply a bestowal upon His people of what He is in relation both to the Father and to them. There is nothing arbitrary in this economy of grace.[1]

> "He is the Mediator, the bond in which the mediation is actually accomplished and realised. Out of that truth every other truth connected with 'so great salvation' flows. Hence, accordingly, the importance of maintaining, and of urging with persistent earnestness, as essential to any just thought of salvation, the twin truths of the Divinity and the glorified humanity of our Lord. Religion, if it have any meaning, means a union between God and man, penetrating to the very foundation of man's being. Redemption is a state into which we are introduced with the full concurrence and co-operation of our nature, and where we become what we are through the processes of actual life."[2]

With this insistence on holding to the right doctrine of our Lord's person Milligan was able to make it clear that the sphere of action of His priesthood belongs primarily to the heavenly region. This is a fact which could bear much emphasis today when in the rush to be relevant the central truths of Christianity are neglected perhaps for fear of being accounted obscurantist or from downright unbelief. We must, as did Milligan, persevere in dwelling on the supernatural, heavenly nature of the Gospel and of Him who is its centre. It is not for lack of relevance that the Gospel appears so often to be ineffective. It is from want of witness, by word as well as deed, in the midst of this world. We must be willing to speak of heaven without fear of being classed with all those who speak of "a pie in the sky when we die". Surely Milligan was right in his insistence

1. Ibid. p. 100.
2. Ibid. pp. 100, 101.

on the need for Christ's people to look to their Lord in His heavenly work. It is not the Church's obedience to that vision that makes her witness so ineffective in today's world. It is the lack of that obedience that mutes her testimony and places her members at cross-purposes in the world. It is not by more attention to the secular that the Church will become relevant. Relevance and a true secularity come as by-products of a greater attention to Him who is the End of the world and who is mighty to save. Only Christ was the truly secular Man on this earth, and He was this due to His very nature as God-man and because He referred all things to the Father, apart from whom He could and can do nothing. This analogically is the Church's true relation to her Lord; she need only testify to Him before the world and in service to the world.

Recognising that one must go through the words of Scripture and historical Christianity to attain a genuine understanding of the Gospel and the Church's mission in the world, one might wonder if Milligan was as aware, as he should have been, of the great hiatus between Church language and the language of the man in the close.

> "The most essential characteristic of His work is not that He treads this earth of ours, engages in its labours, bears its burdens, encounters its temptations, and drinks its cup of sorrows. He does all this, it is true, and it was necessary for Him to do it in order that He might be prepared for His work in heaven. But, these things done, His real work is heavenly. It starts from a heavenly as distinguished from an earthly world, leads to a heavenly world. While the Redeemer comes to us, made in all things like unto His brethren, He comes chiefly as the embodiment of a higher sphere, as One who, uniting us to Himself in a real, not a fictitious union, makes us members of a heavenly family gathered together in that House which is His own, and citizens of a heavenly City of which He is at once the Foundation and the Light."[1]

1. Ibid. p. 102.

5. The Work of the Heavenly High Priest - An Offering

We come now to one of the most important contributions Milligan made to theology. A right understanding of this section will convince us of the great significance of William Milligan's thought. Of course, it was not the first time such ideas have been put forward; rather, it is the clarity, forcefulness and persuasiveness of their re-presentation that impresses the student of his work.

In the last chapter we saw how Milligan had come to locate the central Fact of Christianity in Jesus Christ in His incarnate, risen, ascended, glorified state. The Fact includes more than a past act; it is the present, active condition of the risen Son. In showing the meaning of this condition in relation to the atonement and to the Church, Milligan carried out his task of glorifying the Son. By pointing out how our thoughts concerning the atonement and the Christian life are directly related to the present Fact, he was able to set forth Christianity and its living relationship to Christ. It was simply a making clear of the revelation of the present, unitary, organic nature of Christianity that spoke so powerfully to the Churchmen of Milligan's generation and can do so to ours.

While respecting the chronological sequence of the historical events of Christianity, Milligan was able to bring to view how all those past events have been gathered up in a present, active state in the living Christ. His theology was a much-needed antidote to the legalistic approach to salvation as a present formal status based on a past act of pardon.

It was accepted by all Christian theologians that Christ had offered a sacrifice for sin in His death on the cross. It was generally accepted that at His resurrection Christ presented this offering to the Father on our behalf. It was the idea of many that what Christ is doing now is interceding before the Father with the purpose of calling His attention to the great sacrifice on Golgotha as a sufficient propitiation for the sins of the elect. But in the light of his conclusions concerning Christ's resurrection, Milligan was forced to ask certain questions:

> "Does the ascended and glorified Lord even now present to His Father in heaven anything that may with propriety be called an offering? Or are His heavenly functions summed up in the idea of Intercession?...Are we to confine the thought of 'offering' on the part of our Lord to His sacrificial death? Or are we so to extend the thought as to include in it a present and eternal offering to God of His life in Heaven?"[1]

If we have followed the development of Milligan's theology, we will know at once what his answers to these questions will be. Having discerned the connection between the past fact of the resurrection with the present Fact of the risen Lord, having become satisfied that the resurrection and ascension are in essence one dynamic, present action, Milligan could not fail to point out that the offering made by our High Priest at the cross is being presented even now before the Father on our behalf.

It is not death that is presented. It is life, life that has gone <u>through</u> death. <u>Life</u>. In this way Milligan was able to draw together the ideas of death and resurrection into one concept -- that of offering, the offering of a life that had been through death. And

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1. Ibid. pp. 115, 116.

in this offering Christ's people are involved.

> "...let us look at our Lord's offering as one of life, of life passing through death upon the cross, and afterwards 'perfected' in heaven, and His whole offering becomes one, and our part with Him also one. One with Him, we die in Him, rise in Him, reign in Him. We are <u>in</u> Him from the beginning to the end of our spiritual existence. Our repentance, our cry for pardon, our acceptance of the penalty of sin, our new and higher life, are all <u>in</u> Him -- involved in the very idea of receiving Him as He is -- and not conclusions to which we are led by reasoning."[1]

It is Christ's offering of life that does involve His Church and each believer actively in that very offering. To think of that sacrifice as only a past event is to attempt to rely on a merely legal relationship to pardon, thus avoiding the <u>presence</u> of the living Lord. The effects have been devastating. In essence it is the result of supplanting Grace with Law; and, it should be noted, this began to take place upon the detaching of Grace and "the means of grace" from the person of the living Lord Jesus Christ. In place of that Life in the Church Milligan found a legal system in which man's life in Christ had been separated from his salvation in Him. The heartless and forbidding "orthodoxy" of preachers and laymen had forced men to abandon theology and even Christianity itself. Words pointing to the deepest mysteries of the Faith were bandied about without reference to their intended Object. That which was being proclaimed as the Faith once delivered was so devoid of love and grace that it only exacerbated the anxiety of sinners seeking assurance. Only a proud formalism could be detected making its way in gay abandon through the Church and the world. The Church's life had become

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1. Milligan, <u>The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord</u>, pp. 144, 145.

a stumbling block in the path of seekers rather than a vital witness to the Gospel. Milligan could sympathise with those who sighed for something better and even with those who in an anxious search for that something entered the realm of heresy.[1]

Milligan knew what was needed: a bringing to the mind of the Church and, through the Church, to the world a fresh presentation of the lively doctrine of the Offering of our Lord for sinners. He was aware that his restatement might not be all that was needed, but he did believe that the Church must give attention to its leading principle.[2]

> "In one way or another life will have to be included in the essence of the sacrifice made on our behalf. The conscience will never be satisfied while life is viewed simply as a consequence deduced from a change in our legal relation towards God."[3]

Among other things, the attempt to set up a legal relationship in place of a life is evidence of a desire on the part of the Church to avoid some of the issues brought about by an abiding in Christ's life:

> "...it has unquestionably tended to divert the thoughts of the Church as a whole from the supreme importance of that sacrifice of herself in which alone neither her worship of God or her service to man can be accomplished."[4]

What is true of the Church in this respect is true of its members. In what follows we will detect the ground theme of much

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1. Ibid. pp. 365, 366.
2. Ibid. p. 366.
3. Ibid. p. 366. In a note to this last paragraph, Milligan refers to Macleod Campbell's The Nature of the Atonement as having a powerful influence in this direction of life.
4. Ibid. p. 131.

of William Milligan's thought:

> "In Christ's death the believer beholds more than the ground upon which he is forgiven. In it he also dies to sin, as truly and really and inwardly as in Christ's life he lives to righteousness. All this, however, loses its immediateness of application to ourselves unless we think of our Lord's offering as an offering of life, of life in death. Then every step taken in carrying it out comes home to our life, and has there its corresponding answer. Union on our part to Christ in all His fortunes penetrates the whole process of redemption; and our Lord's offering, while He takes us into it and along with it from the first, is complete as well as one."[1]

Milligan emphasises the point that death is not essential to an offering. Before the creation, from all eternity, the Son was offering up His life and love, His very Self, to the Father, who loved Him. In essence He is offering up that same life to the Father now -- but with this difference: it is an offering that now includes a glorified humanity that has been through death and is eternally established as a continual oblation before the Father in the life and love of the eternal Son, who, because of His union with humanity, offers us along with Himself. This for William Milligan was the central reality, and it served as the inspiration and controlling image of his later writings.

D. The Holy Spirit and Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit, Freedom, and Predestination

In Chapter V we saw that, according to Milligan, our Lord did not appear to His enemies (except for Saul) because they were not spiritually prepared. Some believed and others did not. If the same evidence confronted them, how could this have been? There

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1. Ibid. pp. 145, 146.

follows a most important quotation, in answer to the question:

> "That there is an initial work of the Holy Spirit upon the unregenerate, by which they are awakened and converted, is not indeed, for a moment to be denied. But this work is general and preparatory. It is the work implied in those startling passages of the writings of St. John in which our Lord and His Apostle speak of the acceptance or rejection of the Gospel as dependent on a still earlier discipline of the soul than that of listening to the word then spoken: 'He that is of God heareth the words of God; for this cause ye hear them not, because ye are not of God'; 'But ye believe not, because ye are not of My Sheep'; 'Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice'; 'They are of the world: therefore speak they as of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he who is not of God heareth us not'. In these and similar passages the spiritual history of man is taken up at a different point from that at which the eye rests only on the disinclination of all to godliness. There has been subsequent to that, although previous to the Gospel call, a discipline by which the heart was tested; and that discipline has been carried on by the Holy Spirit as in applying the lessons both of Providence and grace, He has sought to awaken the moral susceptibilities of man. Only, however, when these have been awakened, and when man begins to display a tendency towards the truth and God, so that He may now be said to be 'of the truth' or 'of God', is he in a condition to receive those further communications of the grace and love of Christ which are implied in the promise of His Spirit. Then, drawn to Christ in faith, he is by faith united to Him and, in that union, is made capable of receiving those influences of His Spirit which, by the very necessities of our nature when we yield ourselves to another, demand sympathy on our part with Him from whom they came."[1]

Herein is set forth the Scriptural reason for man's acceptance or rejection of the Gospel. According to Milligan's interpretation, that a man is 'of God' or not 'of God' is determined by his own free action in response to the leading of the Holy Spirit in providence, prior to his being confronted by Christ in His Gospel. A man is either willing or not willing to believe when Jesus faces him. He freely receives or rejects; that is, he is most free when he receives

1. Ibid. pp. 217, 218.

but still in bondage when he rejects.

It is well to remember that the background of Milligan's consideration of the theological problem of man's freedom and God's sovereignty was the Westminster Confession of Faith with its tenet of the double decrees. Surely this tenet was part of the cold, heartless system of orthodoxy which ruled the pulpits and the pews, and against which Milligan was to set forth the present, living Christ of the resurrection and ascension. He knew that the "problem" is logically irresolvable but he at least attempted to locate the problem in history rather than to allow it to be hidden in the divine decrees determined by God before the creation. And this attempt is an improvement over the logicising of the Confession of Faith, for it recognises that the Holy Spirit through providence takes part in the process. All men have fallen, but the Holy Spirit works in history to touch the hearts of men for the purpose of awakening them to the presence of the Holy God. This process takesplace before the moment in time when one hears the name of Christ and is called to believe in Him. Over against the Confession's use of natural theology as an attempt to show that men are without excuse even though their decisions are controlled from behind by the decrees, Milligan did try to find an area within history where men are free to respond to, or to reject, the Spirit of God. In locating the free choice after the Fall and prior to confrontation with Christ Milligan did succeed in giving a viable interpretation to those verses in John which testify to that condition of man which is either of or not of God, of or not of the truth, before the encounter with Christ, yet within history. This

solution, very probably learned from Tholuck, may not be the best. But how else are those verses in John to be interpreted apart from their use in the double-decree doctrine?

Milligan's "solution" does seem to fall short of being completely acceptable, for, according to his theory, even though man's response to God is carried through to Jesus Christ, his rejection of God seems to take place outside the Christological perspective. For Milligan the encounter with Christ simply seals a man's prior decision for or against God. Here election seems to precede grace, for Christ's presence only serves to elicit a temporally prior choice. However, Milligan is able to marshall quite an impressive array of Scripture, especially in John's Gospel and in the Apocalypse, to lend weight to his interpretation. It is true that Christ does bring to light that which is hidden, but surely He is much more than a revealer of what is in man's hearts. Perhaps what is lacking has been supplied by Barth's locating of the electing God and the elect Man in Jesus Christ, who is both the reprobate and the elect, and in whom men are rejected and elected. Thus God's sovereignty and man's freedom are seen as conjoined in Jesus Christ.

Milligan's interpretation of John 5:21 shows how he justified his rejection of an absolute predestinating decree.[1] An argument for or against such a decree seems to turn on the interpretation of "whom he will" in verse 21, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will".

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1. W. Milligan, "Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda", The Homiletic Quarterly, op.cit. pp. 486, 487.

Milligan points out that there is no "them" in the original; the "them" is there only in relation to the Son. Thus there is here no indication of decrees having been made in eternity regarding persons before they entered existence. The context is temporal, historical, and what is being carried out is the redemptive plan of God in action among living men.

Milligan, in referring to the healing that had just taken place, shows that Jesus' will to heal is conditioned by man's will to be healed. The fact that the existence of such a will to be healed or not to be healed precedes Jesus' will to heal thus precludes an interpretation in favour of a predestinating decree. Milligan did write more than once of "the number of the elect"; but he would not allow any idea of absolute predestination to detract from man's freedom.

> "Even if Elijah's prayer [referred to in James 5.16-18] was in one sense the result of necessity, in another and equally important sense the prophet was free. Judged of according to his own feeling of responsibility he was absolutely and entirely free. No theory of the Divine predestination could have saved him from pronouncing judgment upon himself; and on the great day of account the judgment of the Eternal God will be in harmony with that of our own hearts. 'Out of thine own mouth will I condemn thee'."[1]

2. The Distinction Between the Holy Spirit and Holy Spirit

If it is one of the functions of the Holy Spirit to lead men, if they are willing, to Jesus Christ and to the hearing of His Gospel, it is the function of Holy Spirit, as distinguished from the Holy Spirit, to lead men who have believed in Jesus Christ into the

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1. W. Milligan, Elijah: His Life and Times, James Nisbet & Co., London, p. 73.

fulness of life in Him. Faith in Christ leads to union with Him; and Holy Spirit -- i.e. the Holy Spirit "humanised" in the incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ -- enters the believers, truly effects their union with Christ in His risen body, and brings the life and love of the Father and the Son into the members of the Son's body, the Church. And this gift of Holy Spirit was received only after the ascension, i.e., only after the Son had gone to the Father.

As we have seen, Milligan had come to hold that the resurrection and ascension of Jesus involved the complete interpenetration of Christ's humanity by the Holy Spirit. This being so, the way was open to understand that the Spirit received by believers in Jesus Christ is Holy Spirit, the completely humanised -- while remaining Divine and Holy -- Spirit of God, communicated through the risen Jesus to the members of His Body.

> "...as the Spirit interpenetrates our Lord in His human as well as His Divine nature, so our Lord in His human as well as His Divine nature interpenetrates the Spirit. The Spirit bestowed upon us as the fulfilment of the promise of the New Covenant is the Spirit of Christ as He is now. With, by, and in this Spirit we receive Christ Himself, together with all that He is as the Redeemer of men. By faith we become really and inwardly one with Him, and the energies of His life pass over into our life. These may be stronger or weaker, fuller or less full, according to the capacities of the vessel receiving them. But in character and essence they must be the same to every believer. All Christian men are members of the Divine-human Body of which Christ is the Head."[1]

William Milligan believed that what the church of his day most needed was "to reach consistent and clear views upon the Person and Work of the Spirit under the New Testament dispensation".[2]

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1. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, p. 210.
2. Ibid. p. 224.

It is true that today there is a new and welcome surge of interest in the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, it can only be said that a resolve to arrive at "consistent and clear views" upon His Person and Work must accompany this new interest. Evidence of this resolve was apparent at the meeting in 1964 of the World Presbyterian Alliance, the theme of which was "Come, Creator Spirit". Generally, however, it would appear that the theological world might well heed what Milligan gave as the probable reason in his day for the failure to reach "consistent and clear views".

> "...in all probability the chief explanation is our failure to recognise with sufficient distinctness that that 'Spirit', or 'Holy Spirit', to which the Church's vitality must be always due is the Spirit of Christ, the ever-living human as well as Divine Lord, and that He has been too exclusively thought of as the Third Person of the Trinity in His metaphysical existence. We know that to the Lord Jesus Christ the redemption of man is owing, and that He is as much the Finisher as the Author of our Faith [my emphasis] -- when, accordingly, we hear of another work not less essential, but which seems to be carried out less by Him than by an independent Person, our minds become confused, and we are tempted to dismiss the subject. On the other hand, let us feel that the Spirit given by the exalted Redeemer is His own Spirit, the Spirit by whom He forms Himself within us, and the different parts of the plan of our salvation will blend into one."[1]

To attempt to consider the Holy Spirit apart from the incarnate, glorified Son will only lead to sterility, for it is only through the glorified humanity of Christ that the Holy Spirit is in fullest evidence. Milligan was convinced that the Church had come close in doctrine to annihilating that humanity by holding a too restricted conception of the Divine; she needed rather to recognise that humanity and Divinity are in the closest possible conjunction in the Person of

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1. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, p. 224.

Christ. In order to bring all the great doctrines of the Church to bear upon men she must make manifest their inherent humanity. Milligan believed that this required to be done especially for the doctrine of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit, as the Church already had done for the doctrine of the Person and Work of our Lord.[1] He himself was to make his own significant contribution.

3. Union, Identification, and Representation.

In the risen ascended Lord the incarnational union between God and man was completely effected. It is in Christ that there does exist now an eternally perfect union between God and man. On the basis of that union believers are united through Holy Spirit to God and to one another. There is no doctrine that Milligan sets forth more frequently than that of union with Christ.

> "In no part of His work does the Lord Jesus Christ stand alone; and in His Resurrection, therefore, as well as in all its other parts, He takes along with Him the members of His body. Here, as elsewhere, He is the Head of that new humanity which He has formed for Himself. He is the Representative and Life of His people; and what He is determines the nature of their position and duties and privileges. He is not merely the object of their faith; in that faith they are one with Him. He is more than their type and model; in Him they inhere as living stones of the temple of which He is the foundation -- as branches of the vine of which He is the stem -- as members of the body of which He is the head. Whatever befalls Him befalls them. They live in His life; they work in His work; they suffer in His sufferings; they die in His death; they rise in His Resurrection; they ascend to the heavenly places in His Ascension; they sit with Him upon His throne; they accompany Him as His assessors when He comes to judge the world at the last day; they reign thereafter as kings and priests with Him, the King and Priest of the new creation, for ever and ever. This doctrine of the union between the Lord Jesus Christ and His people is the central doctrine of the New Testament [my emphasis]."[2]

1. Ibid. p. 226.

2. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, pp. 160, 161.

Everything flows from this union in Christ; this is the true end of Christ's work on our behalf.

> "Our union to the Son, in the Son to the Father, in the Son and in the Father to one another, and all this in the love which is at once the fundamental element of the Divine existence and the most essential constituent of human happiness -- such is the end of our Lord's work, and the glorious hope in which we are saved."[1]

Once William Milligan had seen the importance of the doctrine of union with the incarnate, glorified Christ, he never tired of stating and re-stating it in all its meaning and implication.

> "...Christians can have no doubt that the experience of the Head will, in due time, be that of the members. The Resurrection of their Lord brings theirs along with it. They are in the same bundle of life with Him; and, when He comes again, it will only be to receive them unto Himself, that where He is there they may be also."[2]

> "The bond of union between Christ and His people was such that whatever befell Him must also befall them."[3]

> "...everything most distinctive of the Church of Christ alike in her inward and outward life, in her relation to her various members and to the world, flows out of the fact that she is the representative not only of the humbled and suffering but of the Exalted and Glorified Lord."[4]

> "...union with Christ not only in inward spirit but in outward fortune is the abiding mark of the Church, one of the deepest and most essential characteristics of her life."[5]

> "The whole revelation of the New Testament breaks down if that union of believers with their Lord which is its central principle is interrupted at any stage whatever of the future. 'Yet a little while, and the world beholdeth Me no more; but ye behold Me because I shall live, and ye shall live'. Our union with Him is not for a time only, but for ever."[6]

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1. Ibid. p. 163.
2. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of the Dead, pp. 58, 59.
3. Ibid. p. 118.
4. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, p. 222.
5. W. Milligan, Lectures on the Apocalypse, Macmillan, 1892, p. 61.
6. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, pp. 192, 193.

What is of prime importance to gather from these quotes is the emphasis Milligan put on the teaching of the New Testament that union with Christ means that what happens to Him happens to the members of His body. We now are ready to consider Milligan's ecclesiology.

E. The Church's Commission: the Representation of the Glorified Lord

We have seen William Milligan move from an evidentialist position into a fuller awareness of the place of the Spirit. We have noticed how he remained loyal to the Holy Scriptures while practising and teaching the science of textual criticism. We have discerned his centring on the resurrection of our Lord as the chief external evidence for the authenticity of Christianity. We have followed Milligan in his becoming aware of the centrality and interpretative focus of the present, active Lord in His incarnate, risen, ascended state, in glory at the Father's right hand. With him we have looked in faith to Jesus Christ and have seen the Son. In seeing the Son we have beheld the Father and have been led to discern in Scripture the beginnings of a doctrine of the Trinity. Especially noteworthy in this final stage of the development of William Milligan's theology has been his identification of the dynamic state of the risen, ascended Christ with our Lord's present offering of Himself before the Father and of His body, the Church, within His self-offering. Through union with Christ, effected by His Holy Spirit, the Church is called to glorify in the world her glorified Lord. What our Lord is now in heaven is to be reflected through His Church.

In this sense the Church re-presents, even repeats, the life of Christ on earth; but the representation is not such that it takes place in separation from the present, dynamic action of her Lord. Just as the past fact of Christ cannot be understood apart from His present state, so the present action of the Church -- though outwardly she is seen, if loyal, to repeat the life of Christ on earth -- must be understood as related directly to the present, risen, glorified Lord. In the strict sense, therefore, it is impossible to repeat -- in the sense of 'do over again in time that which has occurred in the past' -- what continues in the present. The Church then is called in obedience to submit herself to her risen Lord that He might be reflected through her to the world. Just as the Son shows us the Father, the Church is to show the world the Son. Just as the Son glorifies the Father and continues to glorify Him, so the Church glorifies the Son and continues to Glorify Him. The Father is meant to be seen and is seen in the Son. The Son is meant to be seen and is seen in the faithful Church. If the Son's primary office is priestly, then the Church is to re-present the Son primarily in a priestly character.[1]

Once this representative function of the Church is understood then we have the essence of Milligan's ecclesiology, the underlying motif of which is to enable the Church to exhibit her Lord to all who have eyes to see and to proclaim her Lord to all who have ears to hear. Not every one who saw Jesus beheld the glory of the only begotten Son, but all who beheld that glory saw it in the face of

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1. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, pp. 237-247.

Jesus Christ. Not all who heard Jesus had ears to hear the Word the Father had given Him to speak; but all who heard the Word heard it from or through Him. The Church is so to allow herself to be conformed to her Lord that she becomes transparent to Him, the glory of whom shall be beheld by those who have eyes to see. The Church is so to proclaim the Word of the Lord that He shall be heard through her words by those who have ears to hear.

Milligan simply developed in the context of his day the basic analogy of the Church as Christ's body. But to that end he first concentrated on setting forth the truth that Jesus Christ <u>is</u> the Church. Such is the union between Christ and His Church that the two may quite correctly be spoken of as one. The unity is not identical to the archetypal hypostatic unity of the two natures of Christ, but it is analogous to that unity and inheres in it. Once this conception of sacramental unity is grasped then the understanding of the Church as the body of Christ may be received. Only those whom Christ has gathered into sacramental union with Himself are able to enter ever more deeply into that understanding. The process of being organically assimilated into Christ's body is a function of the Spirit, mediated through the humanity of the risen, ascended Christ, and received sacramentally by faith in Christ. Christ testified that He could do nothing apart from the Father. That is a truth concerning the eternal Son and did not come to be true only of the incarnate Son. Similarly the Church, being Christ's body, is able to do nothing apart from her Lord. Just as the incarnate Son glorified the Father through His testimony to and exhibition of His radical dependence upon the Father, so the Church is commissioned to glorify the risen, crucified Son by her testimony to and exhibition of her radical dependence on Him.

Just as the Son fully accomplished His work only in the face of the diabolical hatred and misunderstanding of the world, so the Church faithfully and fully carries out her commission only to the extent that her witness to the sheer grace of reconciliation in the Lord provokes that same devilish malignity and incomprehension of the world.

1. Christ Glorified in the Church's Life and Work

Christ being both divine and human, the Church is to display both natures. But just as for Him the combination of those two natures meant self-sacrifice and suffering in this world, so the Church, to be faithful to her Lord, sacrifices herself and suffers in this world; and just as Christ's sufferings were seen, so the sufferings of the Church in self-sacrifice are to be seen.[1]

If there is one characteristic of the Church's priesthood that Milligan emphasised more than any other it was this: that the Church, to the extent that she is faithful to her Lord, suffers in this world. It was especially Milligan's reading of the Apocalypse that brought this fact home to him. As he read the Apocalypse, the Christian martyr therein is presented not as one of a small class of specially chosen Christians but as the paradigmatic Christian. If a Church -- or if a Christian -- is not suffering in this world, it is not because Christianity has become so established that the world itself has become Christian, thereby obviating any conflict. Rather, if the Church, in whatever society, is not suffering outwardly as well as inwardly, it simply means that the Church is being unfaithful to her

1. Ibid. pp. 247-265.

Lord, who suffered in this world. Milligan recognised that many faithful Christians die in bed (as he himself did), but he also knew that the Biblical teaching is that conflict with the world is the normal result of the faithful glorification of the life of Christ in this world. Again and again William Milligan brought this out.

> "...the words 'in the Lord' [Rev. 14.13], when interpreted in the spirit of the book, seem to imply that the death referred to is such a death as His. The expression, therefore, 'die in the Lord' does not bear that sense of quiet falling asleep in Jesus which we generally attribute to it. It brings out the fact that in Him His people meet persecution and death, and that, though not all in the strictest sense martyrs, they have all the martyr spirit."[1]

Milligan looked upon the Apocalypse as a book for martyrs, i.e. for followers of Christ. Its purpose is to serve the Church in the tribulation provoked by her own witness. Especially is the book appreciated when the Church knows that her back is to the wall. The predictive value of the Apocalypse is not found in an alleged calendar of events chronologically arranged and spreading out over the years to the end of time; it is not a deterministic scheme to be scrutinised by the Church of each succeeding generation to learn what age or dispensation she is to fulfil. The Church rightly has left that kind of "divining" to the sects. But in seeking to avoid this kind of predictive interpretation she has neglected the truly predictive value of the book. Milligan found that value to reside in this: that to the extent the Church is faithful to her Lord, to that extent it may with certainty be predicted that she shall suffer as her Lord did; but she should be of good cheer, for her triumph over suffering and death is secure in the Lord and will be revealed

1. W. Milligan, Discussions on the Apocalypse, Macmillan, London, 1893, p. 252.

to an assembled universe in God's good time. For the witnessing Church the days are shortened, chronos becomes kairos.[1]

But the suffering of the Church is always to be seen within the context of the victory her Lord has already won. The Spirit of the Risen-Crucified is ever witnessing in the world to that triumph.

> "There is a sense...in which, for the followers of Jesus, from the very beginning of their Christian career, the devil is not a foe to be conquered, but one already bound, shut into an abyss sealed over him -- the very lesson of this vision [in Rev. 20]. 'This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith'; the victory before the war."[2]

The faithful Church, in service to the world, seeks to communicate God's holy love to the world; and, the world being what it is, the Church shall suffer. But it is this very suffering, reflecting Christ's own love, that must be seen by the world. If the world through God's grace sees suffering endured for the world's sake, then belief is a live possibility.

> "Again, therefore, it must be with the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ as it is with the Lord Himself; and if she is not seen both to accept suffering and, in accepting it, to triumph over it, she is deprived of one of the main elements of her strength."[3]

With the emphasis on suffering there is always the danger that the Church will seek suffering for its own sake. Milligan recognised this possibility but insisted that what the Church does must be offensive to the world; and because of this, she will very likely suffer.

> "It would of course be utterly wrong in her to make suffering for herself; and it may be urged that there come times when the providence of God does not send suffering, and when,

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1. Milligan, Lectures on the Apocalypse, Macmillan, London, 1892, pp. 190, 191.
2. Ibid. p. 217.
3. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, p. 209.

> therefore, owing to no fault of her own, she cannot be seen to suffer. The reply is easy. It lies in the very nature of the case that the Church's testimony must always be offensive to the world."[1]

The Church's different evaluation of the things of this world and her allegiance to an unseen Object are taken as protests against the style of the world; and yet she must identify with the sufferings and sorrow of the world. Therefore, the Church does not need to invent suffering for herself. Mere loyalty to her Lord will bring it on. No "class" of society, whether the radical left, the radical right, or those who "mind their own business" will put up with those who seek to be faithful to the teachings of the Lord.[2] The question here is obvious, but let us allow Milligan to ask it.

> "But, if so, the inquiry can hardly fail to force itself upon us, whether the position occupied by the Church in our own day in respect to suffering is such as to entitle her to think that she is a true witness to her Lord, and a true exhibiter of His life. Are her labours, pains, self-denials, sufferings, self-sacrifices, the marks by which the poor, the worldly, and the criminal, chiefly know her? Are they not more likely to think of her ministers, elders, and multitudes of Christian men and women, living at ease, not unfrequently in luxury, with little hardship and little toil?"[3]

Surely it was not that Milligan was seeking by an unsympathetic criticism of the Church to rouse her to her task. It was simply a matter of principle. The Lord suffered unto death in this world before the eyes of the world. Milligan knew well that not all suffering is Christian suffering, but he knew just as certainly that the Church that does not suffer before the eyes of the world is being

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1. Ibid. p. 209.
2. Ibid. pp. 9, 10.
3. Ibid. pp. 210, 211.

unfaithful to her Lord. The true Church is the suffering Church. But what of the Church of Milligan's day. Again we let him answer, to learn if he speaks of today's Church as well.

> "They would hardly think thus of His representative now. The Church of Christ rides too much, and not too little, on the high places of the earth; and the world's first impression of her not infrequently, is, that it has only to offer to secure her co-operation for the accomplishment of its own selfish purposes. She would need more, not less, of her Master's cup put into her hands, and more, not less, of His cross to bear, before the world will acknowledge her spiritual power."[1]

Today the Church is aware that something is wrong. Many nominal members who have never caught the vision, are falling away through sheer boredom. Multitudes of young people are simply refusing to play the hypocrite and say what they do not mean. They are not being confronted with the spectacle of a suffering yet joyful Church. They are not being challenged to follow a crucified, risen Lord. But they are being challenged from the left and the right; and they march and sit, or they turn off and tune out with any drug that is available. Surely Milligan's challenge of yesterday remains relevant today. The call is not, "Come and suffer", but, "Come and see and follow and live; there will be suffering, but it should be counted a joy, for it only serves all the more to glorify not only a crucified but a risen Lord".[2]

What impresses the reader of William Milligan's work is how he interpreted 'union with Christ'. 'Union with Christ' has ever been an orthodox belief, but what Milligan saw was that this 'union with

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1. Ibid. p. 211.
2. See Ibid. pp. 211, 212.

Christ' is in a very real sense not only an inner identification with Christ in the Spirit but an outward repetition of Christ's career in this world. Milligan refused to confine every aspect of that union to a worship experience undergone by Christians on a Sunday morning. So close is the identity with Christ through union with Him that those who are united to Him are most likely to meet a similar fate at the hands of the world. Again, it is not that the suffering is sought. It is simply that the love of Christ shed abroad in believers' hearts drives them to show forth that love in the world for the world, as something to be seen. That that love will often be rejected can only be expected, for this was what happened to Jesus, with whom the Church is united. But this love must be shown and seen in the world in order that it might be apprehended as true self-sacrifice. Indeed, suffering for others is both necessary for the world and an integral part of our own salvation.

> "Christ's people must offer themselves in Him with a real and personal appropriation of such a sacrifice as He made, of such a death as that through which He passed. Of this sacrifice, of these labours and sufferings, of this death, the thought of enduring them for others is an essential element...
> ...we must suffer for others, if either salvation in any true sense of the word is to be ours, or if we are to produce that salutary effect on the world which ought to flow to it from the disciples of the Cross."[1]

It is just here that Milligan, following teachings of Scripture, pointed the Church to the scars of the risen Lord and asked, "Where are yours?" Suffering for others is to be regarded as integral to salvation. It is not accidental or arbitrary. Why? Christ suffered

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1. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, pp. 267, 268.

for us. Milligan showed the connection. The essence of sin is selfishness; the very life of God is love. Existence in God is a being bathed in His love. Love shares with others. To know what salvation means we love others and share that love with them. We grow in that sharing. This love and the service it evokes are shared with a sinful, ignorant, suspicious world that will not, until touched by it, accept sheer grace. This love is to be shared with those whose misery shocks the sensibilities and with those whose life style threatens a discipleship that is exercised without a deep awareness of that love. The process of our own salvation is not without pain, for the measure of our willing participation in suffering at the hands of the world for the sake of the world is the measure of our growth in the knowledge of the love of God. Thus this self-sacrifice for others is not to be regarded as a burden, or a probation, or even a duty but is to be acknowledged as germane to the very nature of the salvation of sinners; and the more we enter this arena the closer we are brought by way of the cross to the very heart of God.[1]

Suffering is also essential to the salvation of others. They must <u>see</u> it endured out of love for them before they can know that it is endured out of love for the Lord as well. And just here is where Milligan's sure grasp of the Scriptural revelation comes home to the heart to rebuke and inspire it. Suffering patiently the normal or abnormal ills of the world may be an inspiration to those who already share in the knowledge of God, but it is unlikely that such suffering is very edifying to those outside the Faith. What

1. Ibid. pp. 268-270.

touches and opens the heart more effectively than all else, however, is a visible, living self-sacrifice for others who labour under the dominion of the principalities and powers of this world. Thus a living, visible demonstration of deliverance from the power of evil in the face of those who are held by that power is the surest way to confront them with God's love for them in the Cross of His Son, who has risen from the dead.[1]

Does not the Church need to be taught very carefully the significance of Christian suffering and its necessary role in her life? Apparently such was not the general practice in the Church of Milligan's day; surely it is not so today. And is not this lacuna in the Church's teaching explained by the too easy separation between Christ's sufferings and the sufferings of His people?

When Milligan wrote of the sufferings into which the Church enters as a result of its loving and serving the world, he was not thinking of the sufferings as something separated from the sufferings of Christ. Here again Milligan saw the meaning of the union of Christ with His Church. In line with this thought he quoted St. Paul:

> "'Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church'. It is impossible to accept as satisfactory the explanations usually given of these words, for all of them are marked by the effort to distinguish between the sufferings of Christ and those of His people, whereas the obvious intention of the Apostle is, in one way or another, to identify them."[2]

Paul would never have permitted the thought that Christ's sufferings fell short of accomplishing their purpose, for that very

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1. Ibid. pp. 270, 271.
2. Ibid. p. 272.

purpose is fulfilled when the sufferings the members of His body endure for the good of others are perfected in His once-for-all Self-offering. Here the meaning of union with Christ is simply spelled out in the experience of suffering. And the members of Christ's body are called to suffer -- triumphantly, and in Him -- as long as sin and weakness are susceptible to being thus healed in this world. Not until then will Christ's Self-offering be "filled up". When that happens, Christ, together with all His members, shall be presented to the Father in a perfected holiness and in everlasting joy.[1]

Such is the basis for Milligan's contention that the Church, in union with her Lord, is to offer her life in a love that suffers for others. The Church is called to make this offering. Nor -- for fear lest there be a detraction from the grace of Christ -- is there a place for the thought of any meritorious suffering to be offered by the Church on behalf of herself or others. Again, the grace of union with Christ is the preventative. Milligan, though he did not use the phrase "cheap grace" and "costly grace", felt justified in asking whether the Church had not been trying to opt out of suffering for others by alleging that she did not wish thus to encroach on the one, sufficient offering of the Lord. There can be no place for the thought of meritorious suffering as long as the Church is convinced that she has been accepted by the Lord, that her life is completely in Him, and that she can do nothing apart from His

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1. Ibid. pp. 273, 274.

grace. Indeed it is the very grace of the Lord that constrains the Church to offer herself for the world -- within Christ's own Self-offering.

> "Her suffering for others is simply the conveyance to them, through a life penetrated by the life of Christ, of the grace which flows from Him and leads to Him."[1]

By the time William Milligan was writing these words on the life and work of the Church he had long since moved onward from the merely evidentialist position. The "proof" -- or lack of it -- was in what was beheld of the Church as it existed before the eyes of the world. Though Milligan continued to concede a rightful place to the "evidences" of Christianity in the sphere of historical inquiry and in their capacity of resolving various intellectual problems he obviously had arrived at the belief that apologetics would never make men Christians. In fact an age given over to apologetics was a sign to Milligan of an age of spiritual powerlessness.

> "If the poor, the suffering, the degraded, and the criminal do not behold in the Church as she exists before their eyes that which, by its nature, proclaims its Divine origin, we may spare ourselves the trouble of speaking to them of the Divine at all."[2]

It must have been Milligan's comparison of the Church of his day with the standard set forth in Scripture, especially in the Apocalypse, that enabled him to see the ecclesiastical situation in its true light. It was Milligan's love of the Church and loyalty to it that constrained him to be concerned over failures in its life and work.

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1. Ibid. p. 274.
2. Ibid. p. 276.

One of the shortcomings was the tendency on the part of the Protestants to see only evil in the Roman Church while remaining blind to their own sins. Another closely allied fault was the suspicion with which any discussion of priesthood was likely to be met. The very word 'priest' smacked of 'popery'. As so often happens, fear of a real or imagined evil had supplanted love for the truth; as a result both belief and practice were more in conformity to that which opposed Romanism than to the truly objective standard, the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in Scripture. For instance, the customary Protestant ideology involved an identification of the Roman Church with the Babylon of the Apocalypse. More objectively, Milligan wrote:

> "What does Babylon represent? Only one answer can be given to this question. 'The great city' is the emblem of the degenerate Church...in Babylon we have, under the guise of a harlot, that false Church which has sold her Lord for the sake of the honours, the riches, and the pleasures of this earth. Babylon is a second aspect of the Church."[1]

Milligan likened the double aspect of the Church to the double aspect of Jerusalem. Just as Jerusalem was at once the centre of a degenerate Judaism and the focus of attraction for Israel and God, so the Church in one aspect is the body of the faithful but in another aspect consists chiefly of those whose confession has been only in words but whose action has denied the Lord. This latter aspect is designated by the term "Babylon". Milligan held that history has confirmed what he deemed to be the teaching of John, that the longer the Church exists as a great visible institution the more she tends

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1. W. Milligan, Lectures on the Apocalypse, p. 182.

to realise her "Babylon" aspect. With the abandonment of her first love the Church substitutes the letter for the Spirit, gives her allegiance, and adapts herself, to the world in order to acquire the ease and the support which the world only too readily renders to a church that is willing to frustrate the application of the prophetic Word.[1]

Having delineated what 'Babylon' is, Milligan proceeded to warn his readers against any false identification of 'Babylon' with a particular part of the Church Catholic. "But Babylon is not the Church of Rome in particular".[2] Milligan was only too well aware that many in Scotland -- and elsewhere -- were identifying (as their descendants still do today) Babylon with the Roman Church, and he knew they were wrong. Rome has sinned, yes. But the harlot is fully what she appears to be. Christian Rome has never been wholly what in one aspect she has been so largely. She has combatted error and idolatry with truth. She has confronted earthly magnificence with poverty, and her acts of devotion have caused wonder and admiration. Milligan praises the Roman Church "above all" for so often refusing to tie herself to a king. That she has so allied herself is true, but she also has refused to yield; rather by sheer moral suasion she has led kings to repent their oppressive deeds in the interest of the people. In this Christian Rome is on the Lamb's side, not that of the beast. Milligan saw in the attempt by Protestants to identify Rome and Babylon only a failure to recognise their own sins.[3]

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1. Ibid. pp. 182, 183.
2. Ibid. p. 183.
3. Ibid. pp. 183, 184.

> "Wherever professedly Christian men have thought the world's favour better than its reproach; wherever they have esteemed its honours a more desirable possession than its shame; wherever they have courted ease rather than welcomed suffering, have loved self-indulgence rather than self-sacrifice, and have substituted covetousness in grasping for generosity in distributing what they had, -- there the spirit of Babylon has been manifested. In short we have in the great harlot-city neither the Christian Church as a whole, nor the Romish Church in particular, but all who anywhere within the Church profess to be Christ's 'little flock' and are not, -- denying in their lives the main characteristic by which they ought to be distinguished, -- that they 'follow' Christ."[1]

Whether the Church of Scotland realised it or has ever realised it, this professor, this clerk and moderator of the General Assembly, was the author of a truly prophetic, if not revolutionary, Christian criticism and propaganda, especially in his interpretation and application of the Apocalypse. That a large part of the Church of Christ would be degenerate William Milligan found as a prophecy and warning in the last book of the Bible.

> "That book is written not simply to describe the conflict, the preservation, and the triumph of Christ's true people, but to warn against the coming degeneracy of His professing Church. If in no book of Scripture do we find so striking a view of the glory of the Church both here and hereafter, there is also none that sets before us so melancholy a picture of the degree to which, in the course of her history, the world is to prevail in her."[2]

Milligan discerned in the whole portrayal of Babylon an illustration of the principle he believed to be lying at the basis of the framework of the Apocalypse; John had beheld mirrored in the events of the life of Christ the history of the future. God's

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1. Ibid. pp. 184, 185.
2. Ibid. pp. 185, 186.

intention was that Israel, as the Divine theocracy, should prepare for the First Coming of the Lord, but disobedient Israel had lost the vision, had allied itself with the world, and had become a worldly institution, out of which Christ was to lead the people. When John turned to behold Christ's Church, which was intended to make the way ready for the Lord in His second manifestation, he saw the same scenario. Once again there is capitulation to the world. Persecution and the cross are exchanged for the world's esteem, the world's goods, and freedom from suffering for others. The Church's ears are no longer attuned to the voice that says, "Surely I am coming soon"; instead she adapts the latest procedures in order that she might be relevant and help bring about, gradually, the betterment of the world.[1]

> "The Pharisee, the Sadducee, the Herodian, the Priest, the Scribe, sweep by upon her stage, all of them citizens of the Holy City, members of the new Divine theocracy. The hearts that sigh and cry for a pure and spiritual righteousness are few in number, and are not heard amidst the disputations of the Sanhedrin or the clash of instruments in the Temple. What can happen but that the Lord of the poor and lowly and meek shall at length say, 'Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues'?"[2]

When these words were written, William Milligan was near the end of his career. As he looked upon the condition of the Church he saw much that tended to discourage a man of such high Christian idealism; but what he read in the Apocalypse provided the answer to any kind of disillusionment. Therein he found the course prescribed for him.

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1. Ibid. pp. 186, 187.
2. Ibid. p. 187.

Soon after Milligan's death, his former collaborator and close friend wrote:

> "In later years he showed a tendency to dwell on the state of public affairs around him with some amount of apprehension. The fulfilment of cherished hopes for the Church seemed to him to be relegated to a distant future. But, whatever might betide, his own course was clear."[1]

William Milligan had seen his appointed task to be that of helping "...to prepare the way for the second manifestation of the Lord."[2] He had learned that:

> "What the Church needs is to learn the true nature of her position in the world, to be directed to her true strength, and to fix her eyes more intently upon her true hope."[3]

The programme for the Church would entail an entire change in her thinking. She was to realise anew the meaning and power of her union with her present, living, glorified Lord, whom she was to represent among men by participating in His Divine-human self-oblation to the Father, on behalf of the world and for the Father's glory.[4]

Thus, according to William Milligan, the Church's work is to manifest her Lord among men. Because the Church does not perfectly represent the "perfected" Christ, her primary work must be for herself. She must be what she is in her Lord. Until it is seen that her very shining forth in the manifestation of Christ is her mission, then her work for the world, her mission to the world, will be viewed as something separate from what she is.

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1. W. Moulton, "In Memoriam, The Rev. William Milligan, D.D." The Expository Times, Vol. V, Oct. 1893 - Sept. 1894, p. 251.
2. Milligan, Lectures on the Apocalypse, p. 187.
3. Ibid. p. 189.
4. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, p. 277.

> "Character precedes power. The general teaching of the New Testament is in conformity with this principle.
>
> It was so in the case of our Lord Himself. When the fourth Evangelist describes the deepest and most characteristic feature of His Person, it is in the words, 'In Him was life; and the life was the light of men' -- an order of things which the Church of the present day would be under a strong temptation to reverse. And throughout the Gospel in which these words occur our Lord Himself in carrying on His work, continually refers 'the Jews' not so much to what He said as to what they beheld in Him, for the manifestation of His Father's glory and the revelation of His Father's will.
>
> As with Him, so also with His disciples."[1]

The disciples were to wash one another's feet before taking Christ's message to the world. The Church is to be joyful and thankful in order that she might display the joy and the thanksgiving of her Lord, by <u>being</u> what she is in her Lord.

> "...it is the primary duty of the Church to ask herself whether she <u>is</u> what she ought to be. Is she sufficiently 'one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic'? Is she manifesting to men, as the chief features of her condition, to strike and win them, those beauties of holiness which sparkle like the dewdrops of the morning?"[2]

The Church's relationship to her Lord is of first importance. If the Church is the body of Christ then it must be conscious of this fact. If the Church is the bride of Christ then she must be aware of the fact and <u>be</u> His bride.

> "Why shall she concern herself so exclusively as she does about shining for the world's good? Why not shine for the sake of shining, and without thinking of the world? Why not send up songs in the night although there be no ear of man to hear? Why not clothe herself in her bridal garments although there be no eye of man to see? The Lord Jesus Christ is the Bridegroom of the Church. Can the Church be wrong in often thinking

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1. Ibid. p. 280.
2. Ibid. p. 284.

> exclusively of Him, of the duty that she owes Him, and of the manner in which she can increase His happiness?"[1]

Is it not true that such an emphasis is needed today? In the desire to be relevant, to meet the world at the world's level, to speak the world's language, the Church identifies with the world. And the Incarnation is given as the example of such an identification. But what is forgotten is that in the Incarnation the Word became flesh without ceasing to be the Word. The Church, however, is being asked so to identify with the world that she would cease to be the Church. That is, she would forget her union with her Lord and the words He has spoken to her. In doing this the Church would replace the Holy Spirit with the secular spirit. Indeed, such has been the latter-day insistence on the Church's need of becoming secular that the idea seems to be that each Church and each of her members is to vie with one another in an effort to see which is "unholier than thou". But this must not be. The Church must see

> "...more distinctly than she does that she herself, and not her work, is the great Mission to the world, and until she spares neither labour nor sacrifice to exhibit a more perfect representation of that Divine life and love without which all she either does or suffers, or tells of her doing and suffering, is no more than 'sounding brass or a clanging cymbal'. To her the conversion of the world has certainly been committed, but only to her while she reveals herself to it as the Bride of Christ. 'Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city'."[2]

Having made this point, however, Milligan was far from advocating a separation between the Church's being and doing. What

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1. Ibid. pp. 282, 283.
2. Ibid. p. 285.

controlled his thought was the present active Lord Jesus in His continual self-offering and intercession on the world's behalf. As we have learned, this state of our Lord's being cannot be separated from His action; indeed, His action is integral to His being. The same, therefore, is true of His Church. Having been drawn to a knowledge of our risen Lord, we as members of His body are constrained by the Holy Spirit to act in our Lord's name.

> "The true rule...is, First be, then do. But the Church is not to delay doing. Her doing will even react upon her being."[1]

And just as what the Church does must be governed by Christ's priestly action, so the means she employs for accomplishing her work must be under the control of the Spirit of Christ. Both the end and the means are found in the glorified Lord. Just as our Lord resisted Satan's temptation to fall down and worship in order to achieve His end, so the Church in the Spirit of Christ is to resist any cheap, easy way to testify to our Lord in this world.

When the whole Church recognises its call to be the priesthood for all humanity, the cause of Missions falls into its proper perspective. If Christ in His Person is the High Priest for all humanity, then the members of Christ must personally represent the priesthood of Christ in and for the world. God is love, and the real work of love is personal.[2]

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1. Ibid. pp. 285, 286.
2. Ibid. pp. 289-294.

2. Christ Glorified in the Church's Worship

If the life and work of the Church are seen to be functions integral to union with Christ, the same is true for the Church's worship, for this, too, serves to glorify the Father through the Son and the Son in the bosom of the Father.

Milligan was ever underlining the importance of discerning the principle of anything in order to understand it; and that principle is to be found in looking away from ourselves to the external evidence. It is through such evidence that truth is unveiled. Accordingly, to discover the right principles of worship we must turn to Jesus Christ and to the history of His Church. If we do so, we will find that our Lord always has inspired a common worship. Individual and family worship serve their purposes, but even together they are not enough. It is not that we begin as individual worshippers and create for ourselves a corporate worship. Rather, because we have been incorporated into the body of Christ, who is exalted and glorified, our family and individual worship spring from our common worship; and our common worship is a reflection of the worship of the Church in heaven, a prolepsis of the worship of the Church triumphant.

We are under obligation to take part in common worship, for we already have been bound together in the body of the living Christ, who even now is engaged in offering Himself unto the Father. In this sense, there is no salvation outside the Church. As Milligan has made clear, salvation is not to be viewed as a merely legal status of pardon based on a past act. Salvation is a present,

corporate life and joy in Christ.[1] For this very reason

> "...extemporaneous prayer, however tasteful, and however it may proceed from the most fervent spirit of devotion, can never be the Church's voice. We can never hear in it those common utterances that, sanctified by centuries of Christian usage, proclaim the faith and hope and love of ten thousand times ten thousand souls, which, amidst all the varieties of their outward condition, have been really one."[2]

Though worship benefits us, this is not the primary reason for our taking part in it. We are so made that we are fulfilled only in giving praise to God. If we are silent, the very stones will cry out. We must praise because this is what our Lord did and is doing even now. We are all destined to join in the heavenly Hallelujah chorus. Milligan discerned this as one of the foremost teachings of the Apocalypse. The fulness of praise to Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb drowns out any confession of sin.

> "The low dull tone so often marking our Public Worship has never been the tone of any Christian liturgy. Nothing strikes one sooner in the old Service-books than the absence of confessions except on special days or seasons of repentance. The service of the Church was almost exclusively joyous. Her worship consisted nearly altogether of Psalms, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed (itself a Psalm)..., a few versicles, a few Collects, the lections from Scripture, and these interspersed with anthems, responsories, and hymns. It was one chant, culminating in the Eucharist, the peculiar sacrifice of thanksgiving. It was one effort to set forth 'God's most worthy praise' when the Church forgot for the moment her own necessities in contemplating the love which passeth knowledge."[3]

We must join with our Lord in praise of the Father, and just as salvation is a present possession in Christ, so true worship is a present joy and adoration and thanksgiving.

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1. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, pp. 294-298.
2. Ibid. pp. 298, 299.
3. Ibid. p. 301.

Thus we are led to see that worship, being patterned on the worship of the Church triumphant, is for the edification of saints rather than the conversion of sinners. So prevalent was this belief in the earlier history of the Church that often the unconverted were not allowed inside the church but had to remain outside, and there the gospel would be preached to them.

> "Multitudes regard the Christian sanctuary as a place in which, if they have not to be converted, they have at the best simply to receive instruction. It does not occur to them that there is something strange in receiving the same instruction for fifty years, or even for a lifetime, in 'ever learning, yet never being able to come to the knowledge of the truth'."[1]

Of course, if the members of a church are members in name only, then the gospel is to be proclaimed to them as to all heathen.

As with other functions of the Church, so with worship, it is structured according to the form of the risen Lord. The Holy Spirit comes to us through the risen humanity of Christ and lifts us up into His risen humanity. The Incarnation itself dictates that worship shall conform to the risen body of Christ. Just as there is no false separation of body from spirit in Christ, neither is there a dichotomy between the spiritual and the formal in worship. Milligan again turned to the Person of the incarnate Christ for the chief principle which both vindicates and requires that form be an essential constituent of worship. The Incarnation, whether regarded before or after the resurrection-ascension, has once for all wrought and consecrated the union of those two components that for Milligan constitute created reality -- the outward, formal, and visible;

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1. Ibid. pp. 302, 303.

and the inward, spiritual, and invisible. Especially does the Incarnation reveal that these two components are complements rather than opposites. The Incarnation is not annihilation of the formal by the Spirit. Rather the outward, visible elements are assumed into the Godhead and given eternal status in Christ. Only then is the essential character of the outward fulfilled -- by being brought into full harmony with our renewed humanity. Apart from the revelation of the Incarnation man ever tends to view the outward and the inward as the ultimate polarities of life. We devote ourselves first to one and then to the other. We choose one over against the other or attempt to force a synthesis of the two. The choice, apart from the Incarnation, is between "the material" and "the spiritual"; and exclusive devotion to the one or the other has wrought havoc for all concerned. But the Christian recognises that both the spiritual and the formal have their rightful claims upon us. We know this through Him who took a body and consecrated it by the Spirit and still retains it in the perfected state of glory. Hence the outward has been grounded eternally in the Lord. For this reason outward worship is an essential characteristic of the truly spiritual praise of God.[1]

Though Milligan was well aware that reconciliation of sinful man to the holy God was more germane to the purpose of the Incarnation than was the establishment of an eternal, complementary relationship between "the outward" and "the inward", he nevertheless does appear

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1. Ibid. pp. 305, 306.

to give much more consideration to the latter accomplishment than to the former and thereby tends to neglect the essential role that reconciliation plays in the whole process of revelation.[1]

But all that has been said on these essential characteristics of worship simply centres again on the risen Lord and makes more explicit the principle of representation. Herein we see anew how William Milligan saw everything within the perspective of the Lord Jesus Christ in His risen, ascended state, in His present self-offering unto the Father.

> "In perfect harmony with what has been said of the Church's Life and Work, her Worship is a repetition by the Church on earth of all that is involved in our Lord's presentation of Himself in heaven to His Father. In His glorified condition our Lord is the first-born among many brethren. In His combined Divine and human natures He offers Himself as a continual oblation to the Father. But His people are in Him, and He is in them. In Him they have access to the Father. In Him they have the support and nourishment of their spiritual life."[2]

What is especially significant here is that we are prevented from abstracting Christian worship from Christian life and work. Each is but a different facet of union with Christ seeking expression in every area of life, a union with Christ in His self-offering unto the Father. We are offered within His humanity and thereby are enabled to offer ourselves, our bodies as well as our minds, in His prior and present offering. Thus every action -- be it of life, work, or worship -- converges into the Son's offering of a life that has gone through and triumphed over death. By its present powerful

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1. However, see the extended note on sacrifice in the Old Testament in The Resurrection of Our Lord, pp. 274-304.
2. Ibid. pp. 307, 308.

action Christ's life induces in the members of His body a similar action, or passion, on behalf of the world. We can see, therefore, why William Milligan understood the Eucharist to be that central act of worship in which our Lord's self-offering -- and our offering in Him -- is most eloquently and most truly set forth. With this knowledge we can understand why Milligan was led to favour a weekly celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion and to regard the recovery of this ancient practice as the primary need of the Church of Scotland. Such a practice would be a far cry from its semi-annual observance in the two churches Milligan had served prior to his moving to Aberdeen, where through the close study of the Scriptures he was led to his later view of the paradigmatic character of the Eucharist for the whole of common worship.

As with the Church's life and work, so with her worship, what she is to do on earth is to be conformed to the Given -- to the risen, glorified Lord and to what He even now is doing. He is enjoying an eternal, loving fellowship with the Father in the Communion of the Holy Spirit. Therefore our worship on earth must be seen as flowing from and, only then, leading us to the Given. Thus we can understand why from the beginning the Church has looked upon the Eucharist as the dominant part of her worship, for through participation in the Sacrament of Holy Communion the Church confronted and exhibited to a degree not reached by means of any other ordinance the very essence of her life in her glorified Lord. That essence was revealed through the Holy Supper as joy and power and nutriment received and communicated in His special presence with her.

The Church lives her life in her exalted Lord, and the communication of the blessings of His glorified condition is known to be received most significantly through the Sacrament of the Holy Supper. Therein the eternal surrendering of Himself to the Father in the Spirit flows by way of the Son's Divine-human being into His people, who thereby are enabled freely and gladly to surrender themselves within that eternal Divine and now human self-oblation. No wonder that the Church came to regard the Eucharist as the act of worship. What led the Church to such a view of the Eucharist was not merely its commemorative character; nor was this due in the slightest to any ex opere operato conception of its function.[1] She was constrained to hold this view of its supremacy simply because

> "...the Communion Table was, more than any other spot, the meeting-place of heaven and earth, where the King met His guests in closer than common fellowship and with richer than common blessing. What was thus the case in early Christian times has continued to be the idea of the Church throughout her history. It was not on superstitious grounds, but as the most perfect expression by the members of the Body on earth of the attitudes in heaven of Him in whom they lived, that the Eucharist became the keynote of Christian worship."[2]

So central was the Eucharist in the common worship of the early Church that it set the tone and was echoed in the other parts of that worship. Indeed, so important is the Eucharist that even the accessories of worship should conform to this sacramental manifestation

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1. Ibid. pp. 309, 310.
2. Ibid. pp. 310, 311. That Milligan had been thinking along these lines for some time is indicated by an article entitled "The Lord's Supper", which appeared in two parts in the June 1st, 1871, edition of The Sunday Magazine. Therein Milligan argued that the celebration of the Eucharist took place in all stated assemblies and was the chief purpose of all the meetings for worship in the early Church; both Calvin and Knox, Milligan adds, were in favour of the weekly celebration.

of the exalted Son's self-offering unto the Father. It would appear, then, that with whatever part of the Church's life we begin we are led inevitably to this central Fact -- the risen, glorified, Lord Jesus, who is even now glorifying the Father.[1]

3. Christ Glorified in the Church's Confession

As with the Church's life, work, and worship, so with the Church's word; she has to bear witness to Christ before the world. The kind of necessity laid upon the Church to glorify her Lord by an open acknowledgement of faith is the same kind of necessity laid on Christ to die for sinners. This is not a deterministic necessity or a logical necessity but a necessity of love, a divine "must", which, mediated through Christ, constrains the members of His body to obey.

> "Our Lord came into the world to confess His Father before men, to be a witness to His being and character and aims... There is, indeed, no more characteristic aspect in which our Lord is set before us in the New Testament than that of witnessing.
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> A similar confession then, a similar witnessing, is demanded of the Church when she manifests her Redeemer's glory and carries on His work. It is true that the Church of Christ bears this witness in everything that she is and does, -- in her life, her work, and her worship. But that she is to bear it also in word is clearly indicated by such passages of the sacred writings as speak not only of confession by the individual believer, but of open acknowledgement of a common faith."[2]

If lack of open testimony to our Lord was a mark of the Church in Milligan's day, is it not also a characteristic of the Church today? There is, indeed, confession of the Lord within the walls of the sanctuary, but do we confess our Lord elsewhere, without the

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1. Ibid. pp. 311, 312.
2. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, pp. 313, 314.

gate? If we allow conformity to the world to silence our confession, we are actively denying our union with Christ, who spoke openly and confessed His Father before men. Perhaps it is lack of faith in the present reality of the living Lord, lack of love for Him, for

> "All strong emotions of our nature find utterance in words as well as deeds. When we believe, we speak."[1]

The Church must utter ("outer") her faith. By her union with the true Witness the Church is impelled to formulate a Confession. Because of this union all members are called upon to confess their faith. For any segment of the Church to shut its mouth and not confess is to deny the Head of the Church. For the same reason the Confession in a real sense is the formulation of the whole Church. Again, because of the body's union with the Head, the whole Church -- unless it would deny her union with her Lord -- must, if it is to be regarded as a test of membership, accept the Confession as authoritative and binding.

Relatively little is said today about a test of Christian orthodoxy; much less about a formal charge of heresy. In these days when it appears to be most difficult to distinguish between fact and fancy, when we bend over backwards to avoid the accusation of being "judgmental", when traditional doctrine is questioned or existentialised, the very idea of a test utilising particular words and requiring assent is regarded as reactionary and needlessly narrow-minded.

William Milligan faced something of the same situation in the

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1. Ibid. p. 315.

latter part of the last century. He saw the fault to be that of failing to distinguish between fundamental (not "fundamentalistic") and non-fundamental doctrines. He saw, too, that this distinction required to be made and expressed by the Church. The Church, if it is really to be the Church, must have a theology, expressed. To say that Christianity can get along without theology, to try to effect divorce between theology and religion, would be equivalent to gagging the Church in order to avoid listening to her Lord.

> "Without a theology religion becomes a human speculation. Without religion the comprehensive system of theology becomes a lifeless husk."[1]

Facts are not to be separated from their interpretation; nor is hermeneutics to be separated from the facts. Indeed, one way of estimating the contribution of William Milligan is to view it as a most fruitful product of the proper presentation of both fact and interpretation, of evidence and logical coherence. He was far from the belief (held, according to Milligan, even by orthodox theologians) that a fact, isolated from its context, provides not only its own inerrant interpretation but also the sure foundation of any doctrine derived from it. Only a proper conception of how such a fact is related dynamically to the Person of the glorified Lord will lead to a right interpretation of the relation of "fact" to doctrine.[2] Both coherence statements and reference statements must be controlled by the given object of faith -- the glorified Lord.

As with facts so with words; they must be interpreted in the

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1. Ibid. p. 318.
2. Ibid. p. 318.

light of the historical situation in which they are received. Nor is it legitimate to distinguish between the words of Christ and the more complex statements of theology, if the purpose be that of isolating a certain type of words or statements that do not require interpretation. For Milligan words had no fixed meaning. Christ's very words (if we could understand them without translation, which is itself a kind of interpretation) spoken to us today would be understood in a way much different from the way they were understood by the first hearers. Words take on the tint of our theological coloration. Neither the simplicity nor the primitiveness nor the source of words and statements preclude the necessity of their being interpreted. Milligan believed that the science of theology was not served in pretending that there is any object, whether event or statement, that rightly could claim exemption from interpretation.[1]

William Milligan applied this rule to the Apostle John's presentation of the logia of Jesus. Milligan, as we know, drew a distinction between words and ideas. Ideas remain constant; their expression in words may vary according to the mind of the interpreter. Relevant and extremely interesting statements are found in a portion of two letters from William Moulton to Milligan. The first letter remarks on Milligan's draft for a portion of their joint work on the Gospel according to John:

> "'The sentence, ..."not detailed precisely as he [St. John] knew that they occurred", is very ambiguous. I think you mean only that the record is incomplete, selective; but

1. Ibid. pp. 319, 320.

> readers will understand you to mean altered. It is not enough for me to think that the evangelist has caught the "dominating idea," and has moulded the words accordingly: I believe that (a) the resultant impression of the recorded discourse is exactly that of the spoken words; (b) the recorded words are all actual words'."[1]

A portion of a second letter follows:

> "'...You speak of our divergence in Johannine criticism. Surely that is very limited? Does it go beyond this: you believe that the Gospel exhibits largely the "subjectivity" of the Apostle John; and I add to this that the Apostle John's whole nature -- he being what he was -- could hardly fail to be moulded by Him whom he of all the apostles best understood, to whom he of all the apostles came nearest... This is the impression made on me; and hence, whilst adding to your view, I practically subtract largely, and see in the Gospel -- or think I see -- as near an approach to a portraiture by intrinsic light as I can conceive possible... In proportion as I have patiently and humbly followed the letter, the spirit has seemed to reveal itself more and more clearly...Tell me if you think I am wild and extravagant in this. At all events, I believe your practice is on my side, whatever your theory may be."[2]

If any criticism of William Milligan's hermeneutics is to be made, its essence might well be contained in these comments of one who knew him so well. If, indeed, Milligan believed that when we read the Gospel according to John we read merely the expression of the ideas in John's mind, then -- regardless of how close John was to Jesus -- we cannot expect ever to get beyond John's subjectivity to Jesus. We cannot expect this unless we believe that at bottom the human mind is directly related to the Logos. Of course, a possible resolution of this difficulty might be: that by union with Christ through Holy Spirit the mind of the Apostle John was indeed

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1. W. Fiddian Moulton and J.H. Moulton, William F. Moulton, A Memoir, Isbister and Co., London, 1899, p. 229. See Appendix, Note XII, on Milligan's Idealism and John Wyclif.
2. Ibid. pp. 232-234.

in direct contact with the incarnate, risen Word; and this is what William Milligan believed. We must remember, too, however, as made evident in the third chapter, that while Milligan believed that Jesus Christ is the Object of faith, he nevertheless held that theology is the analysis not of that Object but of that faith. Here again, in answer to the charge that such a conception of theology lands us once more in the realm of merely human subjectivity, Milligan might have contended that the very nature of the central Fact -- the incarnate, crucified, risen Lord in His active state at the Father's right hand, in His continuing offering of Himself, and of us with Himself, unto the Father -- the very character of the Fact will not allow us to separate what has been joined together. But, if this be said in order to do away with the basic distinction between the interpreting subject and the Object of faith (and there is no evidence that Milligan came to such a view), then confusion would reign in the practice of theology. We must, therefore, continue to distinguish between our own subjectivity (whether it be that of the individual or of the Church), no matter how near we are to Christ (even if it be the nearness of union by the Spirit), we must distinguish between this subjectivity and the Objectivity of Jesus Christ and the holy Trinity. This is the place where idealism, no matter how Christian, must come under the judgment of the objective Word; and to the extent that Milligan's idealism was founded -- if indeed it was -- on an unmediated relationship between the mind of the individual and the eternal Logos, then to this extent it must share that judgment.

Moulton, it would seem, believed that the intention of John was

to record the actual words of Jesus and that this is the impression given by the discourses. Milligan, though on Moulton's side "in practice", held that the important thing is that John had caught Jesus' "dominating idea" and had given expression to that idea in words shaped by it. Thus for Milligan -- if Moulton's delineation be correct -- the Gospel according to John chiefly manifests John's subjectivity. If this be so, when we read John's Gospel we come to know John. We never quite get through -- even though John, of all the apostles, was closest -- to Jesus Himself. We cannot, with John, see Jesus; we do not look with him to Jesus. We simply see John. But do we then even see John? Do we not rather, on this hermeneutical basis, through the stimulation of the words of the Gospel, simply become better acquainted with ourselves? Perhaps it is merely a matter of self-understanding after all. This style of hermeneutics can be traced back through Schleiermacher. And we know that Milligan's teachers in Germany -- Neander, Tholuck, and Müller -- had all come under Schleiermacher's influence. We know, too, that Milligan paid his respect to him. However, he differed from Scheiermacher -- as did Neander, Tholuck, and Müller -- in regarding Christ's resurrection and risen humanity as not only integral but as objective to faith. Milligan, as we have seen, went on to bring out that Objectivity to an even greater extent, by following the Holy Spirit in His locating of the ultimate grounding of the new humanity in the hypostatic union and, by that union, in the eternal Trinity. Thus Milligan was led to see that the Church's glorification of her Lord involves a definite development of theology.

That there is a legitimate development of theology should be obvious to the student of its history. In fact, Milligan saw a correlation between the development of theology and the growth of the human mind. According to Milligan, the very nature of the given -- the Lord Jesus Christ in His risen state -- not only dictates the mode in which it is to be apprehended; such appreciation also involves an alteration in the nature of the mind of the receiver. We can call it repentance. Repentance, therefore, is not only a change in point of view but an actual alteration of the mental condition of the believer.

> "...there can be no doubt that there has been a synchronous development between the growth of the human mind and that of our theology."[1]

The new truth itself, uniquely new in being a pneumatic fact -- a spiritual body, which has come into existence and continues in the present to exist in its uniquely new state -- is that which brings about the alteration of the mind, through which it demands expression or glorification; and it is that from which renovation continues. In the following we have Milligan's analysis of what takes place in the mind as it attempts to apprehend and accommodate itself to "a truth" presented to it:

> "...no sooner is a truth presented to the intuitional faculty than the intellectual must seek to apprehend it, to mark it not only in itself, but in relation to other truths, and to fence it off from the abuses to which it is exposed...The intellect would begin to work upon the facts. The logical faculty would begin to supply forms for the truth intentionally seen. One truth would require to be placed in its due

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1. W. Milligan, "On Confessions of Faith", a chapter appended to his The Decalogue and the Lord's day, Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh, 1866, p. 163.

relation to other truths."[1]

Part of the uniqueness of the fact of the Lord in His risen state is its constant and dynamic contemporaneity, which demands that all genuine unfolding of theology take place in its presence. It is to be looked upon not as a fact that simply calls for assent but then no longer requires a continuing acknowledgement. "The truth intentionally seen", this unique "truth presented to the intuitional faculty", is of such an order that it is not to be regarded as having its place side by side with other truths but is to be seen as that truth which penetrates and colours all the rest without forfeiting its place in the evidential scheme.

This growth of theology Milligan related directly to the necessity of the growth of creeds, which he called "...an absolutely unavoidable phenomenon in the history of the Church".[2]

The growth of new creeds does not proceed by displacing the older creeds but by incorporating the truths of the older creeds in the newer one, with only the required addition or unfolding of the truth in order to combat an expressed heresy that has misinterpreted not only the words of Scripture but also the words of the old creeds. Milligan's theory of the development of creeds is similar to his idea of the development of the Apostolic theology of the New Testament. Just as these theologies developed by unfolding and bringing to expression what had been there all along in Christ, so the development of the creeds proceeded through the

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1. Ibid. pp. 162, 163, 164.
2. Ibid. p. 165.

unfolding of what had been there in the baptismal formula from the beginning. And what had been there from the beginning in the baptismal formula as it related to Christ were those truths, those ideas, that reside in the very life and Spirit of Christ, the eternal Logos. According to Milligan, the baptismal formula and the creeds that have developed out of it have both a significative and a coherent character. They serve to refer to the objective truths or ideas as they are in Christ; they also meet the need of coherence in that these truths are shown in their proper relation to one another.[1] What brought the Apostles' Creed into being was the need to combat the misuse of the words of the baptismal formula; the words were used in such a way that the Trinity was no longer the Object of reference. The Ebionites, Gnostics, Docetics, and others were attaching their own meanings to the formula and to other portions of Scripture. These meanings were not completely alien -- this was their subtlety -- but they differed from what the Church believed, and yet believes, to be the true teaching of Scripture. It was necessary that the disputed points be clarified and the truth expressed. The same rule of development governed the formulation of the Creed of Nicaea, for men were now using the Apostles' Creed in much the same way the baptismal formula had been misinterpreted. The Arians employed all the phrases of Catholic theology, but in a distorted way. What then was the Church to do to avoid the peril of a lapse into paganism? It was no solution simply to repeat the Apostles'

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1. Ibid. p. 165.

Creed with a louder voice; the Arians were employing the very terms of that creed in their assault on truth.[1]

> "She adopted, therefore, the famous expression ὁμοούσιος as the best method of expressing her real sense of the teaching of Scripture upon the point at issue. The word is not a scriptural one. It is one of the most purely technical in the whole language of theology; but it was not the word that was valuable, it was the idea which the word expressed, and that idea did not belong to the fourth century or the fathers of the Council only. It was an idea involved in the Apostles' Creed, involved in the baptismal formula of the New Testament, an idea without the definite statement of which the Church had been content so long as it was possible to avoid it, and which at last she did express when, had she not done so, her existence would have been in danger of speedy and complete subversion."[2]

For Milligan, then, the Creeds are the written expression of ideas in their right relationship to one another in the risen Lord, ideas which all along have been contained in the revelatory redemption gifted to us in Him. In the very expression of and adaptation to these truths or ideas the mind of man is made even more to conform to the truth as it is in Jesus. Thus the Church's glorification of Christ proceeds.

It is not to be expected, however, that every member of a denomination should give assent to every particular doctrine of its confession or have identical interpretations. Milligan believed that it was just such a requirement that had prevented the Church in Scotland from producing any really first-class theology. He was aware, of course, of the fate of ~~Mac~~Leod Campbell, who, because of his refusal to attempt to integrate his theology within the restrictive confines of the Westminster Confession of Faith,

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1. Ibid. pp. 165-67.
2. Ibid. p. 167.

was excluded from the Communion of the Church of Scotland. As we already have seen, Milligan was impressed by Macleod Campbell's Nature of the Atonement but was not willing to accept its "theory"; at least he refrained from declaring himself.[1]

Referring to the Church in Scotland, Milligan wrote:

> "In historical inquiry, in exegesis both of the Old Testament, and of the New, in branches of study subsidiary to the understanding of Scripture, works of ability, learning, and permanent value have been produced. But in the highest department of all, in that from which help ought chiefly to come, in the department of speculative theology, we have little to shew. It is not too much to say that, in this respect, the only great work which the present generation has seen -- to be taken, however, along with Dr. Crawford's interesting rejoinder -- is Dr. [Robert S.] Candlish's remarkable treatise on the 'Fatherhood of God'. We have no want of translation of the works of Continental divines, no want of republication of valuable works of an older theology. What we fail in is productiveness of our own; and there is something wanting when a country or an age, instead of producing for itself, refers us to other countries or to the productions of the past.
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> What are the causes of our divinity schools falling short of what may be justly demanded of them? What the remedy? Many will at once fix first, and most of all, upon the extreme minuteness and definiteness of our Creeds, and upon the danger to which any honest and manly inquirer is exposed at one point or another crossing their decisions, and so laying himself open to the offensive charge of heresy."[2]

Another cause of the divinity schools falling short of producing significant theological works Milligan believed to be:

> "...the fact that there is want of a sufficiently deep impression in our churches that high theological attainments and the advancement of theology as a science are a main object of the very existence of divinity schools."[3]

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1. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, p. 327.
2. W. Milligan, "Theological Seminaries in the United States and Divinity Halls in Scotland", The British Foreign Evangelical Review, Vol. XXII, No. LXXXVI? James Nisbet & Co., Oct. 1873, pp. 703,704.
3. Ibid. pp. 705, 706.

William Milligan was concerned that the Church of his day should not neglect the glorification of God by word as well as deed. We can sense in the following how urgent he felt the need was for the Church to capture the minds of the people. This Milligan believed could be accomplished most effectively by a concentration on the most intellectual members of the Church, if not the "cultured despisers".[1]

> "One flash of Christian insight, therefore, which shall so light up an old truth that it shall commend itself to thoughtful men as new, as true to present needs, would be in our day worth a mission-church. One great work of Christian theology, true at once to God and man, would be worth a host of labourers with all their journals, and diaries, and pigeon holes in the church offices of a metropolis."[2]

Needless to say, it was William Milligan himself who did much to fill the theological vacuum of his day. He wrote persuasively on the need to distinguish between the essentials and non-essentials of a creed. In this way he invited his generation to look to the essentials that there, by the Holy Spirit, it might discern the risen Lord. By this means also Milligan encouraged proper Christian "speculation", which, based on the facts or grounded in the Fact, might be set free from a slavish adherence to the intricacies and details of the Church's Confession.[3] At the same time he worked for a better understanding of creeds themselves. By including in a creed only those articles which are essential to the unity of the Head and members, the Church would free herself for a more joyful and a greater magnification of God's glory. By distinguishing

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1. Ibid. p. 707.
2. Ibid. pp. 707, 708.
3. "The one school of native Theology which we had in Scotland (that of Aberdeen in the time of Charles I) was destroyed by the enforcing of the National Covenant" -- The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, Note, p. 327.

between a Creed containing the essentials of the faith and serving as a test for membership and a Confession in which the intricacies and details have their proper place the Church would no longer be condemned to the restricting misery of a bad conscience.

While claiming that no individual should attempt to draw a line between what belongs to a Creed or Test and what pertains to a Confession, Milligan nevertheless believed that there is a principle (he was ever concerned with principles) bound up with the attempt to discover the distinction between the two. Once it is admitted that there is a principle involved, then what Milligan found to be the Fact, in whom all genuine theology is grounded, comes to the fore again; and once more Christ is given the glory.

> "When this is admitted the subject of these lectures -- the Ascended and glorified Lord -- may come in to help us. In Him --risen, ascended, glorified Son of man as well as Son of God, the revelation, the manifestation, of the Father -- believers live. They live not in Him only as He was on earth but as He is in the heavenly and invisible world, as He is in a new super-earthly existence, and as, in that existence, He is now by His Spirit present in His Church, as fully, distinctly, and powerfully, nay, more fully, distinctly, and powerfully present than when He tabernacled upon earth. It follows that this nature of the Lord's Being, in which is expressed not merely what He was but what He is, and out of which flows the existence, the nature, and purpose of the Church, ought to be the essential constituent of her Creed".[1]

The Church, therefore, confesses her Lord and her union with Him -- to His glory. In this she is simply being true to the evidence, the historical facts, to reality, to "the given", to the Fact, to God. Thus William Milligan has enabled us to become aware of

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1. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, p. 330.

> "...the two points mainly necessary to the soundness and progress of the Church's thought -- fixity with regard to the great facts of Revelation, and freedom within her borders to discuss all else."[1]

Again, we have been brought back to that central Revelation which lights up all thought and all reality.

4. Christ Glorified in the Church's Visible Unity

By being loyal to the facts and the Fact, by trusting in the Holy Spirit to enable him to concentrate on just one thing, William Milligan attained a true catholicity. By being faithful to Scripture and to the risen, glorified Lord, he was able to view the Church from a panoramic perspective. It was his very dedication to the study of the New Testament that accounted for his being selected as a member of the New Testament Revision Company, and it was this fellowship of a common purpose with scholars from other communions that confirmed his catholicity. Here was living evidence that the members of the Body are united in Christ the Head. Milligan knew that, where it matters most, all Christians are united by and in the same Lord, and he regarded them accordingly.

> "'To what party in the Church does Dr. Milligan belong?' Directly he identifies himself with none of them, but shares the best characteristics of all. He combines the catholic tendencies of the High Church party with the genial sympathy of the broad and the religious earnestness of the Evangelical."[2]

The differences among communions, with all their individualities, were viewed in the light of the risen Lord. By being true to the

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1. Ibid. pp. 331, 332.
2. Alma Mater, Vol. 7, No. 18, W.W. Lindsay, Aberdeen, 190, p. 173.

evidence of Church history and to Scripture one should seek to discern, and draw out from, beneath the many apparently insuperable differences a common bond to the exalted Lord. For instance, Milligan's study of the New Testament and early Church history convinced him that bishops and presbyters were basically identical.[1] As we have seen, Milligan believed that the Church as a whole is priestly. All believers are members of the priesthood, and the minister is the servant of the priesthood. No special grace is conferred upon a distinct section of the church that is not conferred through the whole body of the Church. It is not that there is no truth in apostolic succession. There is such a succession, but only as grounded in the living Lord Christ. Just as it is an error to think that the succession of bishops is the working of a special kind of grace conferred upon special people apart from the body of the Church, so it is equally wrong to think that there is no such thing as apostolic succession. Even the laying on of hands in the Presbyterian Church is a testimony to its reality.[2]

All of this, however, is not so much in the centre as on the periphery. The chief aim is to look to the risen Christ to see in Him the unity of the Church. Just as the Lord was and is one Lord, so the Church in reality is one Church. This all will admit. But Milligan went further; just as the one Lord could be seen in His unity, so the unity of His Church should be a visible oneness. Only thus is our Lord given the glory that is His due. Christ has but

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1. W. Milligan, "The Ministerial Priesthood", The Expositor, Third Series, Vol. X, 1889.
2. Ibid.

one body; therefore, the glory of Christ demands that His Church be seen as one. Only thus can the Church faithfully represent her Lord in the world. Again, it is because of the Church's union with the one Lord, whose body is visible to the saints in heaven and to the angels and is beheld by His heavenly Father, that the unity of His Person must be seen reflected in the visible unity of His body on earth. "As He is, so are we in this world". That to which William Milligan pointed whenever he wrote on this subject must ever remain at the centre of the Church's thinking on unity; and it is difficult to believe that more apt or more true words could be written on this subject than the following:

> "If therefore it be the duty of the Church to represent her Lord among men, and if she faithfully perform that duty, it follows by an absolutely irresistible necessity that the unity exhibited in His Person must appear in her. She must not only be one, but visibly one in some distinct and appreciable sense -- in such a sense that men shall not need to be told of it, but shall themselves see and acknowledge that her unity is real. No doubt such unity may be, and is, consistent with great variety -- with variety in the dogmatic expression of Christian truth, in regulations for Christian government, in forms of Christian worship, and in the exhibition of Christian life. It is unnecessary to speak of these things now. Variety and the right to differ have many advocates. We have rather at present to think of unity and the obligation to agree. As regards these, it can hardly be denied that the Church of our time is flagrantly and disastrously at fault. The spectacle presented by her to the world is in direct and palpable contradiction to the unity of the person of her Lord; and she would at once discover its sinfulness were she not too exclusively occupied with the thought of positive action on the world instead of remembering that her primary and most important duty is to afford to the world a visible representation of her Exalted Head."[1]

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1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, pp. 204, 205.

Milligan was aware of how useless it was for the Church merely to sing of the beauty of unity and to content herself with an "invisible" unity. The beauty of the Church's unity is found in the risen Christ, whose body is one; and to speak of the oneness of that body, which is invisible to the world, without being constrained to reflect that unity in the world is to utter a pious platitude. Only a visible oneness provides an effective witness to our risen Lord. The Church's mission to the world is frustrated by her fragmented body.[1] No one knows this quite as well as the missionary himself. Perhaps this explains why the initiation of the modern ecumenical movement is largely due to the Spirit of mission convincing the Church through the passionate demands and requests of the missionaries themselves. It was just this subject of the unity of the Church that especially caught the attention of those who heard William Milligan's Moderatorial address and evoked from so many a response of joy.

> "In his closing address we had many pregnant sentences and dramatic touches that thrilled, and sent us home that night thankful that the Moderatorial Chair had been so well filled. We had listened to a prophetic voice and our soul was moved within us."[2]
>
> "...his address as moderator of the General Assembly (1882) which moved me, I remember, to tears of joy, and called forth the rapturous praise of Canon Liddon..."[3]

In the following excerpts from the moderatorial address we are able to catch something of William Milligan's catholicity, and

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1. Ibid. pp. 205-207.
2. W.S. Bruce, Reminiscences, J.G. Bisset, Aberdeen, 1929, p. 270.
3. J. Cooper, "William Milligan", Aurora Borealis Academica, Aberdeen University Appreciations, 1860-1889, Aberdeen University Printers, 1899, p. 186.

we will find that what was said then applies today:

> "...when we break loose from the idea of the One Church, of the one Body of Christ, we are upon an inclined plane, down which we gradually but surely slip, till we come to the thought of the Church as a mere congeries of benevolent societies, of theology as a human philosophy, of the Christian congregation as a company of hearers in a modern lecture-room, and of the sacraments as merely commemorative rites. It need be no matter of surprise, in such circumstances, we lose our power. Once let the idea of the Church as the embodiment of God's own kingdom in the midst of us be lost, and we are shorn of the mightiest element of our strength.
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> ...We must learn to feel more deeply than we yet do that we are an integral part of Christ's body, and in vital connection with the whole body. We are not a mere fortuitous concourse of religious atoms...We are a portion of what is called in the creed the 'holy Catholic Church', planted in Scotland by the Divine Head of the Church Himself...
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> Let us connect ourselves only with the Church of the Revolution Settlement, or even of the Reformation, and we are in a narrow channel confined by local circumstances and national peculiarities."[1]

> "Consensus omnium lex naturae has long been recognised as a true maxim of the world. Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus comes nearer to it in Christianity than many, when thinking of the origin of the saying, are willing to allow."[2]

Such had been the desire of some ministers and congregations that their common worship should be in closer conformity to the ancient Catholic tradition that changes had been introduced. Others, not realising that their own forms were relatively new, had labelled the alterations 'innovations' and had accused those responsible for them of imitating Episcopacy. Milligan designated such an accusation as a disclosure of ignorance regarding the purpose at work behind the changes. The move to conform Church practices more closely to those of primitive Christianity and the Church universal

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1. W. Milligan, "The Present Position and Duty of the Church of Scotland", being the Closing Address of the Moderator of the General Assembly of 1882, Aberdeen University Press, 1883, pp. 14, 15.
2. Ibid. p. 17.

should rather be appreciated as restoration than decried as innovation. It is simply the repentant adaptation of Church liturgy to that dynamic, heavenly pattern given by the risen Lord to the members of His mystical body.[1]

It was this understanding -- that members of different churches are fellow-members of Christ's mystical body -- which compelled men not only to testify to their present unity in Christ but also to work for a unity that is visible.

> "...there is nothing in the actual relations of the different branches of the Church of Christ in Scotland to prevent the attainment of a union and a unity which must be an object of such intense longing to every Christian heart. In the nature of the case there appears to be no absolute bar to this."[2]

Nor, in Milligan's opinion, would the Scottish Episcopal Church prove an exception:

> "The body most difficult to deal with would, in all probability, be the Episcopal Church. It is vain to say, Let that matter alone. Upon what principle can you let it alone? When Christian union is spoken of the starting point must be Christian; and, starting from that point, we are not entitled to omit any body of Christians until it is distinctly shown that the difficulties of conciliating it are insuperable. They may be so here; but it has not been shown that they are so."[3]

Eighty-four years after these words were spoken by William Milligan they were quoted in a sermon preached in the Canongate Kirk, Edinburgh, on Sunday morning, the 27th of January, 1966. The occasion was a service of worship dedicated to the cause of Church

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1. Ibid. pp. 19, 20.
2. Ibid. pp. 35, 36.
3. Ibid. pp. 37, 38.

unity. The preacher was the Rt. Rev. Bishop Kenneth M. Carey, the Scottish Episcopal Bishop of Edinburgh and a grandson of William Milligan. Prior to the sermon it was stated that the presence of a Bishop in the pulpit of the Canongate Kirk was evidence of progress towards Church unity. We well might wonder what William Milligan would have thought. Doubtless saddened by its tardiness, he nevertheless must have rejoiced at the sight.

> "...the day that shall see the different branches of the one Reformed Church of Scotland approaching each other in mutual confidence, in the midst of us, will be the dawning of a day when the morning stars will again sing together, and the sons of God shout for joy."[1]

With all the gladness that comes when there is genuine reconciliation and reunion in this world -- whether between individuals or churches -- it is yet not the joy the depth of which may be entered at any moment. That joy William Milligan knew well; it was the source of his strength and his daily inspiration. In this he was like the Apostle John, whose writings he had made the special study of his life. In an article on the Apostle he had written of

> "...the greater susceptibility of his nature, and...of the manner in which he beheld all things, past, present and to come, as they pointed to, existed in, or were to spring from Him who was the Light and the Life of men."[2]

With the Apostle John, William Milligan was able to look to the New Jerusalem, which is not of the future but of the present, and in this he found his abiding joy. Milligan interpreted the "New

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1. Ibid. p. 41.
2. W. Milligan, "The Apostle John". The Expositor, Third Series, Vol. X, p. 326.

Jerusalem" of the Apocalypse as an ideal picture of the present actuality of the Church of Christ. He knew that the Church of his day had not realised that ideal condition in its fulness. But, following John, he did not allow the unfulfilled circumstance of the present to tempt him to condone or justify the failure of witness and to place the New Jerusalem and the thousand years' reign out of reach in a vague hereafter. He saw that a Church not actually involved in battle had permitted the unavoidable nomistic scheme of this world and its monotonous determinism to enmesh her freedom and blanket her joy. But where the Gospel is known experientially there freedom and joy are in evidence; and though witness to this overwhelming grace unmasks and provokes the enmity of unbelievers against the Lord and His people, it is in the very midst of this battle and the concomitant sufferings that the Church is assured of her Lord's saving presence and of all the blessings that accrue to those who endure faithful. The time is shortened and the burdens made easy. Milligan's fervent wish was that men might enter into the present reality of every blessing in Christ.

Milligan believed that the Church had misread her mission and misinterpreted the Scriptures in leading men to postpone the enjoyment of the actually present bestowal of divine favour in the living Lord. Such, he knew, was not the teaching of the Lord Himself or of John in the Apocalypse. There the hope for the future is grounded in the present reality of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom even now we possess all things. The Church's mission is to bear witness to

Christ and the gift of all things in the gift of Himself; she is to show forth His grace by shining in purity, peace and joy.[1]

Milligan had found this deep joy especially in the writings of John, whom he believed to have been the Apostle closest to the Lord, for had not John been allowed a place on his breast.

> "There too let us rest, that, drinking from the same waters of life, we may the better understand him who has done more than any other Apostle of the Lord for the highest forms of Christian theology in the past, and who is destined to do even more in the future than he has yet accomplished."[2]

Indeed, the development of William Milligan's theology involved its increasing similarity to the thought of St. John, to the mind of the Apostle whom Jesus loved. And it was in this direction that he believed the theology of the future should move.

> "And if almost all the different branches of the Reformed Church are now anxiously longing for a deeper and more living theology than that left them by the Reformation, it is from the thoughts of St. John, and from the manner in which the Lord Jesus Christ, the sum and substance of Christianity, is presented by him, that that theology will spring."[3]

At this point we have reached the end, in this world, of the development of William Milligan's theology.

> "Only one thing more was needed -- that the Lord Himself, long waited for, should come, to transmute each promise into fulfilment and each ideal into its corresponding real. Even so, 'Amen: come, Lord Jesus'."[4]

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1. Milligan, Lectures on the Apocalypse, op.cit. pp. 231-233.
2. W. Milligan, "The Apostle John", op.cit. p. 322.
3. Ibid. pp. 340, 341.
4. W. Milligan, Lectures on the Apocalypse, p. 233.

CHAPTER VII

OVERVIEW, INFLUENCE AND RELEVANCE

The development of William Milligan's theology reached its maturity in his consideration of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's perfect man, man's wounded God, the Beginning and the End. All existence and thought have their source and fulfilment in and through the Word -- incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended, continuing in His self-offering and in the offering of His Body, the Church to the Father, by the Holy Spirit -- and all of sheer grace. This was not Milligan's theological starting point; it was reached through a pilgrimage, theologically and experientially. To get there he had travelled by way of natural theology, the inductive philosophy, the theology of the heart, the science of textual criticism, the fact of the resurrection, the reality of the ascension, on into the offered body of the risen, ascended, Lord, and His continuing Self-offering.

A. Historical Review

Let us now from Milligan's final standpoint look back on that journey and its various stages in the light of the One who was central to his mature theology. There must be criticism, for it would have been much better if the Christ of the final stage had been presented from the first; and the criticism must be accompanied with an appreciation of the Holy Spirit, who was working alongside the seeker and through each stage to guide him not only bodily but rationally ever more deeply into the living Body of the Lord.

We direct our attention to the first stage, academically, in

which William Milligan found himself. We have seen that it was a discipline informed by natural theology. The place of natural theology has been a continuing problem throughout the history of theology. It has been viewed as the foundation of all theology. It has been scornfully and totally rejected. Milligan was taught that it was fundamental to all theology. How could this have been so? What had happened to Reformed theology between Calvin and what was being taught at St. Andrews? Had not Calvin, knowing that God had revealed Himself fully in and through the Word incarnate, through reconciliation in the flesh of the Son, proclaimed and taught the sole sufficiency of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ? Jesus Christ is the archetype to whom all knowledge must bend. And in the fulminating coruscation of the grace of the Lord, man with all his own vaunted knowledge is seen to be utterly depraved. All "graces" flow from Jesus Christ. His incarnate presence, mediated by the Spirit, is the sole basis of all things, including theology. This was the testimony of the Scots Confession and the earlier Scottish Catechisms. Men had been caught up by the living, graceful, Lord Jesus. What had come in between to cast a shadow over the scene? If we read the Westminster Confession of Faith, a truly magnificent document in many ways, we will detect an interloper -- the systematic principle of the federal scheme of theology.[1] There is a warning sign in the pride of place given to the list of the books of Scripture in Chapter I, prior to the article on the

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1. See T.F. Torrance, The School of Faith, James Clarke, London, 1959.

Trinity. Though the actual place of Scripture is viewed as under God, the being and action of the Trinity are not allowed to permeate the Confession as would have occurred if the authors had not had something else in mind. If there be any doubt here, we need only glance at the meagre role the Holy Spirit is permitted to play in the scheme. The difficulty was that a prior understanding was brought to the work of confession-making by men who already knew what was needed and who were not willing always to submit even their pre-conceptions and seemingly quite clever and "Biblical" prior understanding to the discipline of the Spirit in Christ. Was not the Scheme quarried through sincere Biblical exegesis, did it not take into account the historical movement of revelation and redemption, was not the product eminently teachable in its detailed explication of God's Word, and was there not a happy use of current and understandable words, making for genuine communication?[1] True, but in essence, God's grace-covenant was turned into a contract, and thereby made conditional, depending upon works for its being fulfilled. The gospel was legalized. The covenant of grace was placed within a covenant of works. The latter, with its "light of nature" and its claim on man's natural reason and conscience, was applied to all men, everywhere, with a promise of life on condition of perfect obedience. Naturally, men did not meet the terms of the contract and fell in Adam. Within this contractual context Jesus Christ is set forth as the one who merits the salvation of a certain number

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1. The writer is indebted to the Rev. J.B. Torrance for his course of lectures on "The Concept of Covenant in Reformed and Scottish Theology and Politics".

by meeting the demands of the law and thus fulfilling for the elect what they had failed to do. The elect are those who have justifying faith that Christ's work is for them. Thus even faith itself -- since all remained within the context of the covenant of works -- came to be seen as a work, not to mention the continuing need to exhibit marks of sanctification. Here we remember the indignation of Milligan's father against those who were preaching and teaching that Christ had done it all for us; and here, too, was exhibited the failure to distinguish grace from antinomianism. Thus in this underlying confusion between covenant and contract, between works and grace, the judicial aspect gained the ascendancy over the evangelical; and Calvin's great doctrine of union with Christ, and the corresponding sacramental union,were neglected if not forgotten. With atonement and Christ's headship limited to the elect, the Church's mission to all men was held in abeyance while people were busy looking in upon themselves to seek assurance of their being elect and giving themselves to the duties to be expected from the elect. In such an application of man's logic and conception of causality to God's Sovereignty, a whole area was left for the operation of man's natural reason working on that light of nature that remained following man's fall. In reserving a portion of original integrity in his mind, where certain principles, including conscience, remained allegedly unscathed by the fall, "the elect" incurred more guilt by way of detracting from the grace of God. Needless to say, there were many pressures at work, not the least, political and national; but behind all efforts to belittle and tone

down the sheer grace of God were the principalities and powers, in the Church as well as outside.

Man's duties to God within the federal system were given more weight than God's grace to man in Christ, including Christ's movement towards the Father for men. The elect tended to lose sight of his neighbour; individualism and a false concept of freedom began to issue, abetted, as Milligan came to see, by the false way of distinguishing, within the Confession of Faith, between the visible and the invisible church.[1]

For theology the operative concept of contract separated nature from grace and tended to give it an ontological, inherent relation to God. Nature became confused with God, and the truth as it is in Jesus was held down by a lie. The laws of God were viewed as imprinted on nature, there to be read off by man's mind; for it was assumed that the reasoning part of man's mind remained intact following the fall and that it was subject to improvement by training in the laws of logic. Here, too, it was believed that there remained an inherent, an intrinsic relationship between the form-structure of man's mind and the form-structure of God's being. It was on this very basis that natural theology was not only legitimised but also necessitated. To the information supplied by man's mind and his reading of nature, special revelation, based on that primary general revelation, came indeed as necessary to man's salvation, but only through being securely placed on the sure foundation of natural theology. Thus Protestant scholasticism found itself using the

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1. W. Milligan, "Wyclif and the Bible", The Fort-nightly Review, Vol. xxxvii, new series, Jan. 1 - June 1, 1885, p. 793.

tools so carefully wrought in the middle ages by the very Church she originally sought to reform, giving a ring of truth to a saying of the Orthodox Church, that Western protestants are in reality only crypto-Catholics.

We must notice, too, how well the popularised structure of the then triumphant power of natural science fit in with the God of the Westminster Confession of Faith. In reaction to popular piety the divines rightfully had laid great emphasis on the utter objectivity of God, but in so doing they inserted an almost Aristotelian immutability into His nature. He was high and lifted up by a negative and eminent comparison to man, a way that seems to be God-centred but by which man himself remains subtly in the centre. God has in an eminent degree the best characteristics of man, without being limited in the way man is. Yet this concept of God is basically static, unloving, impersonal, sovereign indeed, but at a distance, personally far removed from man's action and passion in history. He is depicted as a God who has programmed, by means of the decrees, the decisive acts in history but who Himself remains aloof and above it all. How easily might the god of deism fit into this pattern. And such a god of precision and machine-like qualities seemed to be required by the Newtonian mechanism. Determinism and causality were the working-out of the decrees of God in the universe, double-predestination the outworking of election among men, every event in and among men, in history and throughout the universe, conforming to the absolute pre-determined laws of the sovereign God. How natural for Chalmers, the evidentialist, the propagandist for

science, the preacher of the Word, and the theologian of the Church to find Jonathan Edwards' deterministic theology so congenial to the federal scheme and so fitting to the allegedly archetypal and unalterable laws of science, discovered by Isaac Newton. Just as the reference statements of science had been transformed by the popularisers into a great mechanistic scheme of coherence, so had the federal system of the Westminster Confession tended to be detached from the logic of grace and glory in its reference to the dynamic, active Word incarnate; thus it gradually became fixed in a static system, with its primary and secondary causality, made coherent by and grounded in man's own arrogant logic. The impulse behind the promoters of the scheme to make it required thinking for all in the realm not only revealed a false identification of this particular, historically conditioned formulation of the faith with the Substance thereof, but also gave the lie to the theoretical view of the Westminster Confession and Catechisms as Church standards to be held in subordination to the Holy Scriptures. Such was the grip of this supposedly subordinate standard on the minds of Presbyterians in Scotland that one school which was giving promise of producing a truly genuine theological literature -- that of the Aberdeen Doctors -- was unhesitatingly ruled out of court and with it, as Milligan himself came to see, any further sustained attempt to do theology within the realm.[1] Not many, even of the most earnest, wish to expose themselves, by differing even slightly with the Confession of

1. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1901, p. 327.

Faith once delivered, to the unnerving charge of heresy.[1] Individuals, such as Fraser of Brea and Thomas Boston and the Marrowmen, came to view with alarm how incursions, in the name of faith and under the aegis of the Confession, were made upon the grace of God in the Lord Jesus Christ, in the multiplication and contractualising of covenants; and attempts were made, within the framework of the Confession, to set forth a more graceful theology, ever to the reactionary charge of antinomianism.

In a sense the motive of these forays into the land of grace was antinomian; they were threats to the overweening nomism of a self-contained theological system and its demand for uniformity of interpretation of the Scriptures. But it was the threat in which grace ever appears to those in a theological lock-step. And then when McLeod Campbell gave up the attempt to work within that basic contractual scheme, out he was thrust, on the motion, be it remembered, of William Milligan's Professor of Moral Philosophy, George Cook.

We will note how the Holy Spirit began to succeed in breaking down the closed system -- from the outside through geology and Darwin and from the inside, as it were, by bringing to the attention of the Church the existence of many various readings of Scripture, but not without resolute resistance from the keepers of the system. The incursion of the Spirit of Jesus will be followed throughout this chapter. Let us simply recall and spell out a bit more at

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1. W. Milligan, "Theological Seminaries in the United States and Divinity Halls in Scotland", The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, Vol. XXII, James Nisbet & Co., Oct. 1873, p. 704.

length how He effected His penetration. Men had been made aware of the real contingency of the world of nature, due to the prior rediscovery of the Biblical God as personal, willing, creative, purposeful power, who by the free word of Grace called into being out of nothing a world to exist over against Himself in its own relegated right. In this manner the medieval conception of the relation of the world to God was broken and men were set free from a sacralized world to investigate it from out of itself.[1] Exorcised of both the Aristotelian final causes and the Augustinian participation in divinity, the world could then be viewed as an object to which God Himself was turned and to which He was pointing in order that man might cease trying to read off His nature from its face and begin seeking in the sweat of his brow the clues to understanding the patterned dynamics of its contingency and thus engage in man's God-given task of regaining by a great instauration his role of steward not only of the mysteries of God's world but also of the order of God's seemingly chaotic world, all to God's glory. To such an exciting and rewarding venture was man called by the great Christian propagandist of natural science, Francis Bacon, whose own Confession of Faith speaks eloquently for the Lordship of Jesus Christ over all of nature and the destiny of men. The very commerce of men's minds with creation, by way of induction from its contingencies, serves the sanity of men. Not only by a true reading of

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1. See T.F. Torrance, "The Influence of Reformed Theology on the Development of Scientific Method", Theology in Reconstruction, SCM Press, London, 1965, pp. 62-75.

God's written Word but also by submission of the mind to the forms discovered and indeed forced from the world of nature, the idols of imagination and conception are cleared from the mind and room is made for the full receiving, through faith, of the Word who was made flesh, who yet inheres therein, and who is the true inspiration and sole end of induction. Thus both the confusion and the separation of the kingdom of man and the kingdom of God are precluded and brought into their intended relationship. Thus, also, theological science and natural science are viewed not as identical but as serving within their own proper spheres the one glory of God by methods adapted to their distinctive objects.

As we have seen, the unholy alliance between theology and a false understanding of natural knowledge -- i.e. natural theology -- received a shattering blow from David Hume, whose incisive writings questioned the legitimacy of the philosophical principle that served as a basis for natural theology -- the principle of causality. We recall how Thomas Reid attempted to save the day for natural theology, in the interest of revealed theology. Accepting Hume's critique of the attempt to ground the principle of causality in nature, Reid and his followers sought, by turning in on their own minds, to discover therein at least the suggestion of the needed principle. And with that turn the <u>idola</u> were thereby reinstated and genuine science, to that extent, ceased. William Milligan, an adept pupil, accepted such a perversion of induction in the misguided belief that this principle -- along with the principle of conscience -- was required for the legitimation of theology. But is not God Himself, as

revealed in the Incarnate Son, through the Spirit, the sole foundation, and all of grace? Why the continued attempt to safeguard God or to defend Him who needs no defence, but desires only witness as a free response, within the prior and continuing human response in Jesus Christ, to the loving self-giving of the Father? It was, of course, only natural that an indirectly known, an inferred, God should require supporting principles and evidence isolated from His own self-witness. Again, this approach to God was bound to be mechanical because it started, and proceeded by logical argumentation, from nature, not from God as revealed in the Incarnate Son by the Spirit. The whole effort was pushed in the wrong direction by the radical separation between God and nature and the mechanisation of nature by the popular interpretation of Newton's scientific achievement. Nature mechanised, God logicised, both abstracted from the God-man Jesus Christ, the Lord of grace. Thus the task of theology, after the hewers of wood had determined the authenticity of the text of Scripture, was that of systematising the doctrines to be found in it. And on what organizing principles? On the presuppositions of the federal scheme, of course. This is pseudo-science.

Before moving on to the Continent to re-assess what Milligan found there and incorporated into his developing theology, it is well to pause to acknowledge a permanent indebtedness on Milligan's part to his Scottish training -- that of the necessity of pursuing and interpreting evidence. From his course in evidential apologetics at the Royal High School in Edinburgh, from the Baconian

philosophy of induction, the commonsense emphasis on the scientific method (however misused), and the evidentialist handling of the miracles, especially the miracle of the resurrection, Milligan learned to have complete respect for that which can be heard, seen, and touched -- for evidence. It was well that Milligan had been led to this deep respect for evidence and for the Word; for when he arrived in Germany, after having worked his way through the time of the Disruption of the Church of Scotland, with all of its debates and ill-feeling and recriminations and demands for decisions, he would have been most vulnerable, to the point of vertigo, to the fresh air and the intoxicating atmosphere of the German Biblical and Theological scene. Milligan was greatly influenced by his stay in Germany. From men such as Neander, Tholuck, and Müller he learned lessons in hermeneutics and in theology, which he incorporated into his developing thought. Above all, there is little doubt that in answer to the question, "What do you value most in what you received in Germany?", the answer would have been, "Life!" After the confinements of a theology based on a mechanistic handling of evidence for the bolstering up of a closed confessional system under a God whose existence was to be known only by inference, the openness of the German universities and their faculties, with all their variety of scholarly opinions and the concomitant encouragement to think for oneself, must have been almost overwhelming to the intelligent and seeking student in his new-found freedom. Of course, all that was life was not Life. There were the various effects of the Enlightenment, of Romanticism, of pietism, of the critical

philosophy, of the Hegelian dialectic, of the Tübingen syndrome, of man's delight in his own progress in the natural sciences, in himself, and in his supreme self-consciousness. To strike in arbitrarily at one point, we must recognize that in Germany, too, there was the same esteem given to natural science, epitomized in the Newtonian triumph. There was the absolute causality of a mechanistic universe. Kant, too, was impressed by this and contributed to it. He was awakened from his Wolffian slumbers by the sharp jabs of Hume. How to account for the obvious success of natural science and conserve the a priori of the mind in order to leave room for God, freedom and immortality? Kant, too, with the critical apparatus, turned in upon the mind, attempted to find the legitimate limits within which man's mind may operate. Admitting that all knowledge comes from experience, Kant initiated a Copernican revolution with his claim that the mind through the a priori forms of intuition and the synthetic a priori categories played a much more active part in our knowing than was realized.

> "...the theory of rational principles was substituted for that of innate ideas.
>
> The transformation was the work of Kant. His conception of a structuring capacity replaced that of a store of ideas; he attributed an active, dynamic character to reason, leaving nothing of the passive understanding of the Cartesians whose conception of reason was confined to the intuition of 'simple entities' (natures simples). Active reason was to be exercised according to certain norms and deployed within certain frameworks. Kantian philosophy also distinguished itself in that it secularised reason, defining it without reference to divine understanding or a collection of eternal ideas. Reason was no longer a mere reflection, it had become a source."[1]

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1. R. Blanché, Contemporary Science and Rationalism, Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh, 1968, p. 2.

True, there is an external object that calls forth the experience of phenomena, but that object cannot be known in itself. Only the phenomenon itself, structured and given objectivity by the mind, can be known. The objective element resides in the fact that all men share an immutable, identical basic mental structure. Space and time, being a priori forms of intuition, are simply omnipresent, structuring concomitants of experience. Space and time are not "out there" nor are they to be identified with the sensorium of God. God is not to be confused with man-structured phenomena but is to be known through the moral instinct of man, through his practical reason. We notice how God is divorced from any integral relationship to or in the space-time world. Again we see that the starting-point is all-important. Kant, first accepting the all-ruling causality of the world, on which he believed natural science was constructed, placed causality as a synthetic a priori category in man's mind, having been convinced by Hume that it cannot legitimately be read off the face of nature. Kant was right in bringing to light the mutually affecting relation between man and the world, but he erred in giving man's contribution an almost creative and entirely regulatory power over the creation. It is difficult to realise just how deep are the Kantian influences on thought even today, especially noticeable in "modern" man's utter reluctance to believe that God should not only have created the world but that He should have enfleshed Himself within it to become subject to its created structures and, while adapting them to His own nature, continue to respect them and use them as everlastingly

valid in a new heaven and a new earth.

Schleiermacher, too, was impressed by the fruits of natural science; but, unlike Kant, his evangelical pietism would not allow him to identify God and morality. However, like Kant, Schleiermacher started not with the objective revelation of God in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, but with man's own consciousness. In place of the categorical imperative Schleiermacher singled out man's pious self-awareness of absolute dependence upon God. Here he thought he had found true objectivity, through the feeling of coming up against the absolute causal power; but he, too, would not allow his God to have any discernible inner Trinitarian distinctions or any integral relations, other than causally, with the space-time world. For Scheiermacher every doctrine, to be seen aright, must be reduced to a function of men's awareness of complete dependence. There follows an excerpt from a letter of Schleiermacher to F. Lücke, published in 1829:

> "As you know, my dear friend, I have set myself the following task from the very beginning: to represent that consciousness of God which has developed within the Christian Church and which we all bear within us, in such a way that it may appear as unalloyed as possible in every particular aspect of doctrine and that every such particular articulation of doctrine may be perceived in its interconnection with all the rest. Thus I have sought to reflect the self-same unity which perseveres in feeling, whether it be attached to our awareness of free will or to our awareness of being bound together with nature or to our awareness of historical development. The doctrine of God in my dogmatics is to be understood strictly from this conception of its task.
>
> I am most decidedly conscious of having never deviated from this rule, even on a single line. Not only my positive statements but also my criticisms of previous formulas are strictly subject to this rule. Indeed previous formulas have never sufficed for me."[1]

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1. F. Schleiermacher, trans. T. Tice, Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol. 21, 1968, p. 309.

The point is this: the starting-point is man's self-consciousness. From man's consciousness of sin and consciousness of redemption as effects upon the community of the church, we are able to trace historically the source of this new awareness to the causal image of the person of Jesus Christ, in whom there existed a perfect God-consciousness within a perfectly potentiated self-consciousness. And it is due to the one-to-one correlation between the structure of Christ's perfectly potentiated God-consciousness and the structure of our potential God-consciousness that by the continuing influence of his historical image, we are enabled to realise gradually what he has realised perfectly. But again we notice that the final interpreting focus is that consciousness common to all men. This interpretative centre was what Neander, Tholuck, and Müller inherited and adapted from Schleiermacher; and Milligan was not uninfluenced.[1] True, Neander, Tholuck, and Müller all focused more centrally on the historical, risen person of Christ than did Scheiermacher, but they retained as their starting-point the other focus of man's self-consciousness and thus, in the end of the day, continued to hold with Schleiermacher that the basic ellipse or reciprocal relationship is not that external relation between the incarnate Son and the Father but that internal relationship between the self-consciousness of Christ and the self-consciousness of each man. Consequently, theology is the unfolding and making explicit man's faith rather than the eliciting of the

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1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905, pp. 120, 121.

inner rationality of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and man's union with God in Christ by the Holy Spirit. Similarly, the hermeneutics of Scheiermacher, adapted in large measure by Neander, Tholuck, and Müller, though clarifying the text and attempting to show the importance of the hermeneutical circle, took as its first and final interpretative references the mind and milieu of the author in a divinatory relation to the mind of the interpreter rather than, and more scientifically, the person of Jesus Christ, hypostatic union and, through Him, into the Trinitarian relationships.[1]

It should be noted that Schleiermacher, Neander, Tholuck, and Müller all had an admiration for Platonism above any other philosophy, believing that of all the philosophies the Platonic approached most nearly to Christianity. It was the Origenist, Augustinian slant which they most readily adopted. They saw man related to God through his mind. In man was a spark of divinity. The formal structure of man's mind was very closely related to the formal structure of the mind of God.[2]

Neander and Tholuck, along with the Greek fathers, interpreted John's prologue in this context.

> "The temporal beings are the thoughts of God which have become existent, and which were contained in archetype in the Logos...as the existence of beings has its root in the Logos, so also has their life. This life, however, was in men a self-reflected life, a consciousness of God effectuated by self-consciousness...
>
> In men, in general, the Logos was divine consciousness as potential, but not come to energy in will or cognoscence;

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1. See Articles on Schleiermacher by T.F. Torrance and J.B. Torrance in the Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol. 21, 1968.

2. F. Tholuck, The Two Students, Guido and Julius, Shaw, London, 1855.

> in Christ, the divine consciousness alike in will and cognoscence attains to absolute energy, and unites itself with the self-consciousness in personal unity."[1]

Milligan acknowledged the great influence of Schleiermacher and was influenced by him and his disciples, Neander, Tholuck, and Müller, to the extent that he came to hold the following hermeneutic principles:

> "...The most important rule for the interpreter of the thoughts of others, -- that the idea in the mind of the speaker or writer, and not the merely literal interpretation of what he says, is the meaning of his words.
>
> Nowhere is the great rule of interpretation more necessary than here, that not only the words themselves, but all the circumstances connected with them must be taken into account when we would determine the idea in the speaker's mind; and that the idea, and not simply the literal rendering of the words, is the meaning of which we are in search."[2]

Here we note the important rôle played by idealism in its enabling its practitioner to be critically aware not only of the underlying meaning of words and statements, but also of the pre-conceptions and prepossessions. This is good as long as one thinks from a centre in God, who by the rational activity of His Word in creation and redemption has set forth that centre, whence springs the true judgment of all thoughts. The danger is that the idealist is prone to allow his own preconceptions to remain undisturbed, while he uses them as the basis of the criticism of others.

Now this was where Milligan's respect for Scripture militated against an un-self-critical idealism. He knew that his thoughts were to be conformed to the mind of God as revealed in Scripture.

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1. F. Tholuck, Commentary on John, 1844, pp. 72, 73, 76. (the first edition, 1826, was dedicated to Neander).
2. W. Milligan, Elijah, James Nisbet, London, 1887, pp. 22, 103.

However, he did believe that John's Gospel, for instance, could be interpreted correctly only by seeking to know John's mind, in its close association with the mind of Christ.[1] It was by this intimate relation to Christ and by viewing His actions as symbolic of the ideas and principles in the divine Logos that John himself was conformed to the Archetype and was enabled to write the Spiritual Gospel.[2]

Of course, the question to be put here is, "Is the mind of Christ only a paradigmatic aid to us in the conformity of our minds to the mind of God, or does the real incarnation of the Logos in Christ remain and continue to be, as risen, the only Mediator between us and God?" The latter must be true if we have taken the Incarnation seriously. If a genuine intersection between God and the world has taken place, then Jesus Christ can only be the Way, the Truth and the Life. This, without a doubt, was Milligan's belief. But even here it is possible to "idealize" the answer. It can be said, "Yes, there has taken place a real union between man and God in Christ, but that union has been effected through a correlation between the mind of Christ and the mind of man". This answer is tempting to an idealist, even a Biblical idealist. Milligan himself distinguished between an ideal incarnation and an actual incarnation.

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1. W. Fiddian Moulton, William F. Moulton, A Memoir, Ibister, London, 1899.
2. W. Milligan "Symbolism in the Gospel of John", British and Foreign Evangelical Review, Vol. XX, Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh, 1871, pp. 720-752.

Referring to the passage, Rev. 12:1-6, Milligan writes...

> "...we learn what is intended by the Son who is born to the woman. He is not the Son actually incarnate, but the ideally incarnate Son, 'the true light which lighteth' every man coming into the world'."[1]

But an ideal incarnation is still in the realm of ideas and has not yet crossed the chasm; only the actual incarnation has done that. What makes it sometimes difficult for Milligan's interpreter to be clearly convinced that Milligan's theology derives from a thinking from out of a centre in the incarnate Christ is the idealist cast of his theological language. The constant dyadic contrast between the ideal and the actual, the abstract and the concrete, the spiritual and the material, and the eternal and the temporal, leads the reader at times to wonder if this distinction is treated almost as a complete separation of two worlds, held together only by the participation in the divine ideals somehow fulfilled in Christ. As previously indicated, this writer believes that Milligan took seriously the utterly real incarnation of the Word in Christ Jesus, but it does seem to him that the idealist philosophy employed in explicating it was not the most suitable frame for such an endeavour. Milligan deliberately chose this framework, believing himself to have found it in Scripture. He believed he was following in the line of Wyclif in his Biblical, metaphysical realism, finding in him a Reformer who had been "on the mount" and some of whose ideas were in advance of the later, better known Reformers.[2]

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1. W. Milligan, Lectures on the Apocalypse, Macmillan, London, 1892, p. 121.
2. See Appendix, Note XII.

The following is a summary of Wyclif's theology of the Incarnation and comes very close to what might be said of Milligan's realist (idealist) position; though there is more here than Milligan ever explicitly wrote, at least it might explain what Milligan meant by his expression, "the ideally incarnate Son":

> "Indeed, the theory (realism) is necessary to his view of the Incarnation. The Word, Wyclif says, assumed Man, nor yet abstract Humanity, but Man the 'res communis' by virtue of which the individual supposites are what they are; assumed Man as he is in the 'forma exemplaris', in the Divine idea. Christ took on himself in the Incarnation the nature not of a man, or of many men, but the 'communis humanitas' of all men, so that he is at once 'communis homo' and 'unicus homo', The Man. And lest this should seem to place 'the Man Christ Jesus' at a distance from his brethren, 'the sons of men', Wyclif constantly repeats that, to the Realist, it only brings Christ nearer, nay identifies him with other men; for the 'forma' and the 'formatum', the individual and the universal are identical. Although he would not deny the extreme, Realistic position 'univeralia ante rem' in the sense of priority in thought and causation, 'universalia in re' is Wyclif's favourite formula. Every universal is identical with each and all of its supposites. Therefore 'unica communis humanitas est quelibet persona hominis, i.e., the one common Humanity is identical with any individual man: again 'hic communis homo...est idem singularis homo, omnium hominum, quilibet'. Christ is the 'homo communis', the idea of Man; by the Incarnation he is objectively 'unicus homo'; he is 'eadem communis humanitas que est quilibet frater suus'. Certainly here was a brave and subtle effort to give to the understanding a reason for the faith that Christ is one with all his brethren. It is another instance of our author's desire to fix his foundations deep and solid. He was not content with metaphorical expressions about membership in Christ; he essays to establish that union on a metaphysical necessity, and to bring it home to others as a logical sequence. This identification of the Eternal Word with the idea of Man, and at the same time by reason of the metaphysical oneness of idea and reality, by reason also of the logical identity of universal and particular, the identification of Christ the Incarnate Word with each individual man, is the keystone of the treatise, and is, so far as I know, in this form peculiar to Wyclif. The realist position is essential to his argument and, even, as with much plausibility he asserts, to the very existence of catholic doctrine."[1]

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1. J. Wyclif, Tractatus de Benedicta Incarnatione, ed. with intro. by E. Harris, Wyclif Society, Trübner & Co., London, 1886, pp.xxi,xxii.

As "brave and subtle" as this is, it simply shows most clearly how impossible it is to explain the how of the Incarnation. One is led to sympathize with Bonhoeffer's reference to Luther:

> "Luther remarked, 'you shall point to this man and say, "That is God"'."[1]

The summary of Wyclif's theology does offer an explanation, however, of what Milligan meant by the phrase, "the ideally incarnate Son". The Incarnation was effected ideally in the identification of the eternal Word with the eternal, divine idea of man. For the metaphysical realist, this was a real incarnation, for the ideal is the real. The actualizing of this identification in the created world -- involving the birth, death and resurrection of Christ -- provided the metaphysical grounding for man's union with God in Christ on the additional assumption of the logical identity of the particular and the universal.

Milligan had drunk deep from the well of life in German theology. One of his favourite passages of Scripture was, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men". This deeper appreciation of the liveliness of theology he received from the teaching of Neander and Tholuck, who did much in their land to turn the Church away from rationalism back to the source of her life in Christ, indeed, in the risen Christ. But, as we have seen, and as Milligan saw, there was a tendency among even this group to psychologize and to confuse the Holy Spirit with the Zeitgeist, and the third Person of the Trinity with the created spirit of man.

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1. D. Bonhoeffer, Christology, Collins, London, 1966, p. 53.

Thus in place of a Christ-centred appreciation of the doctrines of the Church, there was substituted, in the era of Schleiermacher, the tendency to view these doctrines as centred in man's consciousness. Milligan saw, even in the best offerings of German theology, the danger of subjectivism and a possible undermining of reverence for the Word of God. He recognized that to be effective Christianity had to be positive or dogmatic and stand squarely on the historic doctrines, not in defiance of modern science and thought but as truly scientific in its respect for documentary evidence and the self-evidence of the Lord.

Are the needs of the Church greatly different today? Are there not "neologists" on the scene today looking upon the given Object of faith as an objectified construction of self-understanding? Are there not continuing attempts, in the name of scholarship, to remove Jesus Christ from the sphere of the space-time world, to confine Him to a desperate land of the eternal moment and the existential decision? Is there not today, as well, a refusal to speak of the resurrection of Christ as an historical event? Is it no more than a "realization of transcendence?" Is it not amenable to the investigations of historical scholarship?

> "The event of Christ's resurrection, his life and his eternal reign, are things removed from historical scholarship. History cannot ascertain and establish conclusively the facts about them as it can with other events of the past. The last historical fact available to it is the Easter faith of the first disciples."[1]

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1. G. Bornkamm, Jesus of Nazareth, London, 1963, p. 180.

We know that the evidentialist had presuppositions, too, if not prepossessions. Milligan himself came to see that the evidential approach to Scripture or doctrine leaves much to be desired, for Christ Himself can be missed thereby, especially if the evidentialist's presuppositions are grounded in the principle of causality and Aristotelian logic. The Gospel is a continuing assault on our own presuppositions, whether they be "scientific", metaphysical, psychological or sociological. What Milligan learned and what we today can bear learning is that the Christ of the Gospel actually changes our minds, not only our ideas but the structure of our minds. True, Milligan had his presuppositions, but his mind was singularly open to the evidence of Scripture, to being moulded by the mind of his Lord. How else can we explain his continued dedication to the science of textual criticism and his unwearied attempts to give every New Testament word and sentence its due weight of meaning? This was the impression he made upon the other members of the New Testament translation company that met in the Jerusalem Chamber in Westminster many times during a ten year period.[1]

B. Documents, Evidence, and Testimony

If Jesus Christ is known primarily through the documents that witness to Him, how important it is to have the texts that most nearly approach the originals; and how very important it is

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1. W. Moulton, "In Memoriam, The Rev. William Milligan, D.D." The Expository Times, Vol. V. Oct. 1893-Sept. 1894, p. 250.

that the method of that approach be as scientific as possible. And what other way is there than that of weighing the evidence according to settled rules? Here the external evidence of the documents stands over against the subjectivities of men. The documents are there in space-time and are not to be thought away. They have their "facticity", even their recalcitrance. They weigh something even before we assign them their weight as witnesses. They can be seen. They can be touched. They are to be respected for their sheer participation in created being. They take up room.

God's Word is mediated to us through the space-time, created actualities of this world. The science of textual criticism presupposes the palpable handling of documents in order to their weighing. Tactual and visual contact precede interpretations. Put in another way, you see and hold the Bible before and while you read it. Analogously, it was the Incarnate Word, as a space-time being, who spoke before and after His resurrection. It is the risen, ascended, Incarnate Word who communicates, by His Spirit, with and through His visible, palpable Body, the Church. It is through the lively space-time oracles of Scripture and through his preachers that He continues to speak by the Spirit to those who have ears to hear.

It was just this complete respect for the Bible that led Milligan to study the methods of textual criticism, in the belief that God's objective Word is mediated most clearly through those texts that stood nearest to the source. The greater his respect for the external evidence of the documents, the more aware he became

of man's tendency to allow his judgment to be controlled by pre-possessions.[1]

It was the external evidence that most impressed the New Testament witnesses, and it is in the direction of the external evidence that the witnesses pointed. Milligan saw this in his approach to the resurrection of our Lord.[2] The tendency today is to view a distinction between fact and meaning as somewhat naive.[3] When it is said that a fact is no more than a judgment of evidence, one can appreciate that there can be no divorcing of the human factor from an integral relation to the fact under judgment.[4] Herein we discern that there can be a false separation between fact and evidence to the extent perhaps that facts are resolved almost without remainder into evidence, which is always open to varying interpretations. But, finally, it would be false, in the propaedeutic effort to point out that the situation is a bit more complex than formerly had been supposed,to allow the subjective human dimension to swallow up the external evidence or fact. Evidence and interpretation are not the same thing. In the statement -- "a fact is a judgment of evidence" -- the emphasis should rest, not on judgment, but on evidence. Certainly, natural science has forced us to recognize

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1. W. Milligan, "Tischendorf and Tregelles as Editors of the Greek New Testament", British and Foreign Evangelical Review, XXV, 1876, p. 149.
2. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, pp. 73, 74, 75.
3. See J.L. Austin, Philosophical Papers, Oxford, 1961, p. 12; H.P. Owen, The Christian Knowledge of God, Athlone Press, London, 1969, p. 48f.
4. F.H. Bradley, "The Presuppositions of Critical History", Collected Essays, Vol. I, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1935, pp. 1-70.

that scientific knowledge of "external facts" is ineradicably personal, but nonetheless objective.[1]

All this, it seems to the writer, would have met with the assent of Milligan, for such a view appears to be implicit in the very title of his book on the Resurrection, The Resurrection of Our Lord. The controlling factor in the weighing of the evidence of the resurrection of our Lord is the risen humanity of His Lordly Person. Here we are enabled to discern the genuinely personal and human dimension. Admittedly, Milligan is not as explicit on this point as he might have been, but the movement of his thought was steadily in this direction.

In a comment on Genesis 2:3, published in 1866, we discern how even at that date Milligan was attempting to hold on to a literal, historical interpretation of creation, even in the face of the findings of geology. He demonstrated his respect for evidence, however, in being willing to drop literal historical interpretation if it was contradicted by the scientific historical evidence. We notice, however, that such a respect for evidence only served to bring out the presuppositions of idealism with which he worked rather than enabling him at that time to see all history in the light of the risen, ascended Lord.

> "Nothing can be more simply historical (Gen. 2:3). In the second verse, 'God ended His work which He had made'; Then follows, in the third verse, the fact of blessing and sanctifying connected with the plainly historical fact stated in the words before us, because that in it 'He had rested from all His work'. Nothing but an express intimation

1. See M. Polanyi, Personal Knowledge, Aberdeen Gifford Lectures, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958.

> to the contrary could justify any one in viewing these words as aught else but historical.
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> It is true we are here met by the difficulties which have arisen from geological inquiries. Yet I am not aware that geologists have demonstrated that six natural days -- for of such days all fair interpretation requires us to understand the 'days' spoken of in the first chapter of Genesis -- had no connection with the work of constituting the world as it is. Till this is done the far-reaching consequences of applying other than historical principles of interpretation to the account of the creation may well make us hesitate to abandon the latter. It is enough, therefore, for our present purpose, that, in some way or other, six natural days were associated with the creation of the world. We dare not lose sight of the fact that the same statement is given us in the fourth commandment (Exod. xx.11). Even although we were under the necessity of applying other than historical principles of interpretation to the account of the creation in Genesis, the distinction of one day from the preceding six would still remain as the idea of the Divine mind to which expression was given in the narrative."[1]

What must be given its due, however, without a false separation between the factual data and the person of the interpreter or the Person of Jesus, is the relevance of evidence within the revelatory context.

> "...the question is not whether an irreducible minimum of objective-historical data about Jesus is necessary for Christian faith...but whether the human forms and worldly patterns assumed in divine revelation are themselves part of the ultimate 'event of Jesus Christ."[2]

Eyewitnesses of the risen Lord retained their competence to tell us what they saw and heard and touched. It is up to us to look at the facts to which they witness and judge their nature for ourselves, in so far as we can. If the body of the risen Lord was not completely identical to the body that was laid in the tomb,

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1. W. Milligan, The Decalogue and the Lord's Day, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1866, pp. 133, 134.
2. J. McLelland, "Mythology and Theological Language", Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol. XI, Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh, 1958, p. 17.

that does not invalidate the apostolic testimony any more than there is anything in the nature of the risen body, when revealed, to withdraw it from the sphere of the Apostles' sensible perception. Consequently, is there anything more to keep us from looking at the evidence under testimony than there was to prevent the disciples from looking at our risen Lord when He presented Himself to them? The eyewitnesses were called to bear witness to what they saw and heard, and they did so, under the most trying conditions. Why should any prior understanding of what could or could not have taken place blind or deafen or numb us to that evidence and that Apostolic testimony? What should preclude our entertaining these facts as facts which called forth such courageous and joyful testimony? What should prevent our judging for ourselves in openness to the demonstration of the Spirit of the risen One and in obedient conformity to the Apostolic witness and teaching? Why should the exercise of faith in response to the breakthrough of grace be restricted to an existential decision or a blind leap instead of being encouraged to penetrate to the primary objectivity of our Lord through the evidence proffered as an "analogated means of grace?"[1] It is both reasonable and scientific in the best sense to assent to Milligan's claim (herein he followed the evidentialists) that the origin of the Apostles' own belief and the existence of the Christian Church can be explained on only one hypothesis: the Apostles' belief was called forth through sensible

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1. Ibid. p. 17.

evidence or facts, and their testimony was believed by others because it was viewed or valued as competent testimony. Because they saw and heard, the apostles believed. We have not seen or heard, but have believed because the testimony we have received from those who did see and hear is valid and competent. This, of course, is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is in this area of evidence and testimony and witness that theology needs to go to school again as a little child in loving obedience to the Given.

> "Jesus Christ intended His Gospel to rest on facts; and in correspondence with this intention, the whole stress in the apostolic Church was laid on witness. The first thing the Church had to do, before it developed its theology, was to tell its tale of facts."[1]

We follow Milligan now as he looks with the eyewitnesses -- solely in terms of the external, sensory evidence -- to the actual space-time presence of the risen Lord when He chose to confront the disciples during the Forty Days. Milligan understood that the full meaning of the resurrection cannot be determined in the isolation of the risen Lord from the movement of history or from the total cosmos. The focus of his attention, however, was on the uniqueness of the Lord in His risen humanity; such, he believed, was at the centre of the disciples' attention. There was something startlingly new in this humanity. Here was Jesus, the same but different. He had gone through death, in the body. That body stood before them. He spoke: He invited the tactual test: no ghost, but a spiritual <u>body</u>, having flesh and bones and its own

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1. C. Gore, <u>The Incarnation of God</u>, Bampton Lectures of 1891, pp. 74, 75.

place and time, lovingly, thoughtfully meeting the disciples' needs. "My Lord and My God!" God in the flesh, the Son our Brother, flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone. It was this unique existence, this new creation -- not out of nothing but out of the old creation, the old Adamic body -- that confronted the disciples as personified, embodied Grace. This particular place and this particular time, this specific space-time created by the unique bodily presence of the risen God-man, served as the culminating context and graceful transformation of the disciples into their Apostolic office as primary, first-hand witnesses, eye- and ear-witnesses to Jesus Christ, revealed by the Holy Spirit.

> "'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you' and when he has said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'."

This genuine fixation of the Apostolate, in correlation to the empty tomb, was the inexpungeable locus of assurance.[1] It was unrepeatable. This Self-witness of the risen Lord to the disciples was now by the Holy Spirit translated into the testimony of the Apostles to the risen, ascended Lord. The function of the Apostolate was that of witnessing to the whole Christ, clothed in His Gospel; but the central focus was on the risen, ascended Lord, who had gathered up in Himself His whole earthly ministry, including that of the Forty Days. The innermost circle of evidence surrounding the central focus was what the Apostles had touched and seen and

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1. See T.F. Torrance, Space, Time and Incarnation, Oxford U. Press, London, 1969. "...the Christian doctrine of the resurrection cannot do without the empirical correlate in the empty tomb; cut that away and it becomes nonsensical." p. 90.

heard during the Forty Days. They had touched and seen and heard a new kind of Man. The Spirit of the risen, ascended God-man "made sense" of the whole earthly witness, including the appearances during the Forty Days. The new era was inaugurated, the end-time entered. The Spirit of the new Age had come upon them. Forgiveness, eternal life, love, new bodies awaited, already theirs in Christ. Repent, believe, receive and be baptized in the name of the new man, grounded in the Lord. All of this followed with the logic of grace and the inevitability of the glory that had come in Jesus and would be revealed in God's good, new time. Milligan spelled out the chief implications in his books on the Resurrection of Our Lord, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, The Resurrection of the Dead, and in several works on the Apocalypse. But it would be a mistake to pass over the central, abiding importance of the Forty Days, when an elect group of men saw with their eyes, really saw, saw out there in space-time a new man, when they really heard the new man speak, when they really, palpably touched the new man. Here repentance finds its inspiration and focus. From the beginning of their calling the disciples' prepossessions were under attack. Revelation involves reconciliation, atonement. As long as they were willing to allow Jesus to be the point of final reference in all matters, then repentance proceeded in a healthy manner. Jesus the Judge was Jesus the Saviour. This Peter and Thomas and the others learned; this Judas did not. Nor are we to regard the Object of revelation as under the control of man. Milligan made this clear in his distinction between something

that can be touched at man's will and something that can be touched only if there is a will to be subject to touch. Here we note Scotus' distinction between a natural and a voluntary object. Our Lord maintains His sovereign freedom even within the limitations of the new humanity.

> "...the word 'tangible' may be used in two different senses, and we may deny its applicability in one sense to our Lord's risen body, while we admit it in another. It may mean either subject to be touched apart altogether from the will of him whose body is spoken of, or capable of being touched according to his will, and in such manner as he may choose. In the first of these senses it has no application to the body of the Risen Lord...It would rather appear that our Lord designed expressly to distinguish between the tangibility of His own body and that of ordinary matter; and any objection, therefore, resting on the supposition that by tangibility the same thing is meant in both cases rests upon preconceptions of the objector and not upon the facts presented to him...an entirely new state of things is thus presupposed, not only in the bodily condition of Jesus, but in the mental attitude of believers..."[1]

The Apostles were chosen to witness the new human Being and to bear witness to Him, whose new humanity, in hypostatic union with the eternal Son, proffers us, and by the Spirit conforms us to, His new place and His new time as we, believing in the Apostolic testimony, witness in turn in our time and in our place, awaiting the reappearance in glory of the risen, ascended Lord. Just as the risen body of Christ is neither mere matter nor sheer Spirit but a spiritual body; just as Holy Spirit is neither mere human spirit, nor the Holy Spirit devoid of the human, but the Spirit of God adapted by the humanity of Christ; so the simultaneity of the Christian present is neither mere time nor sheer eternity but the

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1. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, pp. 16, 18.

fulfilled time of Christian victory and joyful witness to that victory. The Church is commissioned by her Lord, mediately through the Apostolate and immediately by the Spirit of the risen Lord, to live and work in the day of the Lord.

Milligan makes it clear, especially in his books on the Apocalypse, that the chief function of the Church is witness, martyria. This witness, of course, includes the oral message of the Good News but not to the exclusion of a life-conforming testimony, in line with the Apostolic witness, to the risen, ascended Lord, who even now is offering Himself to the Father and us in Him.[1] Our very witness, then, is a self-offering within the once-for-all and continuingly present self-offering of Christ.

Milligan is right in making it clear and certain that the ascended body of Christ retains its bodily nature. He insists, however, that the dimensionality of the ascended Body, though having its own locale, is not to be viewed as simply an extension of the dimensions of this world. His present dimensional position is to be thought primarily in terms of a state or condition. Milligan equates this state with the Biblical heavenly realm as over against the earthly.[2] He deliberately dissociates this condition from the Lutheran doctrine of ubiquity and will not

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1. See T.F. Glasson, "Kerygma or Martyria", Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol. 22, No. 1, March 1969, pp. 90-95. The point is tellingly made that the message is not to be divorced from the medium of witness. Cf. also H.P. Owen, The Christian Knowledge of God, Athlone Press, London, 1969, p. 50.

2. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, pp. 20-27.

dismiss the idea of a definite locality.[1] Nevertheless, he still retains the equivalence between the heavenly-earthly and the ideal-actual contrasts.

It is just possible that Milligan had been influenced, as almost every one had, by the Newtonian conception of space and time, which militated against his making even more specifically clear that the ascended body of our Lord carried with it its own space-time continuum.

> "It is unnecessary, in thinking of heaven, to confine ourselves to the thought of any particular locality. We have no need to imagine to ourselves a region either higher than the blue sky or situated in the centre of those millions of starry orbs which move around us in silent majesty. Nor have we to pass onward into that interminable space which, as we must suppose, stretches beyond the limits of all created things, in order that there at last we may enter into the abodes of everlasting bliss...In the New Testament, in particular, heaven is contrasted with earth, less as one <u>place</u> than as one <u>state</u> is contrasted with another."[2]

It is just at this point that the idealist philosophical framework of Milligan's theology -- to the extent that it is influenced by the ideal-actual correlation -- appears to be less than adequate for the task of making room for the centrality of this "third dimension" grounded, as it were, in the Incarnation, and developed by the resurrection and bodily ascension of our Lord and His continuing session at the right hand of God.

> "As the Incarnation meant the entry of the Son into space and time, so the Ascension meant the transcendance of the

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1. Ibid. p. 25.
2. Ibid. p. 21.

Son over space and time without the loss of His incarnational involvement in space and time."[1]

Needless to say, no philosophical or theological framework is entirely adequate, by the very nature of the case. But it does seem that a proper use of analogy in relation to the hypostatic union of the divine and human nature in Jesus Christ, the incarnate, risen, ascended Lord, would have served Milligan's purpose more accurately than the idea-actual dialectic was equipped to do. There is not the slightest doubt, however, that with Milligan, the incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended Lord was the archetype of his theology and ecclesiology.

C. Union with Christ and Visible Suffering

As with the Reformers, so with Milligan, the doctrine of union with Christ is integral to the doctrine of the nature and mission of the Church. Time and again, he emphasizes the importance of that living conjunction of the risen Christ with His body the Church. What the incarnate Son, in union with the Father, did on earth to glorify the Father, the Church, in union, by the Spirit, with the risen, ascended Son, represents on earth, to the glorification of the Son and of the Father. It is not that the Church takes over and repeats what the Son has done and has ceased to do. Rather the Church simply participates in the Son's continuous Self-offering, carried with Him before the Father into heaven. In this sense, what the Son has never ceased doing cannot be repeated but only, by

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1. T.F. Torrance, Space, Time and Incarnation, Oxford U. Press, London, 1969, p. 31. See also Professor Torrance's unpublished paper, "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ".

the grace of insertion into the risen humanity of the Lord, re-enacted by incarnational participation here on earth.[1]

Milligan saw in Scripture that just as our Lord on earth witnessed to the Father not only by words but also by visible, bodily, symbolic action, learning obedience through what He suffered, so the Church to the extent that she shares, through the Spirit, in the heavenly life of her Lord, witnesses to Him on earth not only by word but also by visible, bodily, symbolic action, learning obedience through what she is willing with joy to suffer for the Lord's glorification.

This is what comes through most strongly in Milligan. The focal point, the locus of action, in his orthodox, trinitarian, incarnational theology -- centred, as we have found, in the incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended Lord Jesus Christ -- is the visible, embodied representation by the Church on earth of her Lord in heaven through union with Him in the Spirit. As He is, so are we. As Christ looked to the Father and glorified Him on earth, so does the Church look to the Son in His incarnate glory and glorify Him on earth. Because of union with Him, whose present life is a life won out of death, the Church lives that life on earth which leads through death and out of death further into the life of Christ. Because our Lord witnessed to the Father and His love here on earth as it is in heaven, He was crucified by those who hate life and grace and forgiveness. If the Church is loyal to her Lord and

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1. See W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, p. 127.

witnesses to this same unconditional love and grace and forgiveness, she, too, comes into conflict with the principalities and nomistic powers of the world, but endures faithful. Just as Christ's love was an embodied, seen love, so the Church's love must be an embodied, visible love. Just as the love of the Lord was known through a seen suffering that bears all things, so the Church makes God's love known through a visible suffering for love of the world, for Christ's sake.

There are other relevant and better known contributions that Milligan made -- and they will be mentioned -- but the most neglected perhaps because the most painful, was his lifting up before the readers' eyes the place of suffering in the life of the Church and her members. What brought Milligan to face this issue squarely and challenge the Church with it was simply an honest exegesis of Scripture, especially the Apocalypse. Because of her union with Christ, in whom Life triumphed through suffering and death, the Church's stand for grace in this world provokes its enmity and unbelief, thus revealing the world for what it is on its own and revealing also, through the Church's suffering, yet joyful and triumphant, love, the love and forgiveness of God. And Milligan interpreted both John's Gospel and the Apocalypse as showing that the suffering of the Bride of Christ in the world is the inevitable concomitant of her loyalty. Milligan believed that the Apocalypse taught that martyrdom, in the sense of suffering not only inwardly but also outwardly, is the result of genuine witness to the reconciling Lordship of Christ in His grace over all the world. The

Christian stands in the gap between all conflicting persons and parties and nations, and he witnesses to the reconciliation already effected for all in Christ. In this way the life of the Body of Christ is offered up to the Father within the continuing priestly Self-offering of the Son before the Father in heaven even now. Milligan was well aware that this self-offering of the Church is not to be confused with the seeking of suffering, in order that by suffering the Church might be saved. To the contrary, a covenanted response to grace, within Christ's own continuing response, is the only truly Spirit-inspired action and passion of the Church. Herein there is exhibited, advertised, the love of God for the world, as well as the judgment of God against all unbelief and rejection of grace.

It is impossible to put too great a stress on the Word, its rationality, its spokenness and its audibility -- aimed at the ears of men. But, at the same time, the Incarnation of the Word means visibility, tangibility -- aimed at the eyes of men, given over into the hands of men. Milligan saw this to be so in Christ, who, in addition to being the Word and speaking words, actually brought things to bear upon the eyes of men, and gave Himself over into the hands of men in bodily, symbolic action. The Father loved Him and showed Him; Christ so loved the world that He showed the world His loving Sonship, even unto the death of the Cross. The Church is called to travel along the same road, under the same conditions, in Christ.

This spelling out of the meaning of union with Christ in

relation to the loyal Church's loving, joyful, victorious witness to, and its visible, suffering contact with, the world -- and the resultant contrast to the easy, adjusting life of the church in his day -- was, in this writer's belief, William Milligan's least noticed but most "existential" contribution to the Church, not only of his day, but of our day, too.

D. Milligan's Contribution to the Church's Right Understanding of the Resurrection, Ascension, and Heavenly Priesthood of Christ

Within the foregoing "prior understanding" -- and only within it -- we move on to highlight Milligan's contribution to the Church's right understanding of the Resurrection, Ascension, and Heavenly Priesthood of Christ, especially as these relate to worship, unity and confession.

When Milligan chose to concentrate on the resurrection of our Lord, including His revelation as risen, he selected the central, historical, empirical reference for the Church's life and witness. With this all the Churches agree, as well as most church people who almost instinctively look upon Easter as the celebration of the Church year.

> "The six hundred or so delegates of the Churches who met together at New Delhi in 1961 constituted a more widely representative gathering of the human race than has ever before in the history of the world been brought together under any auspices whatsoever. The kaleidoscopic variety of humanity was represented here. The delegates were divided on most of the social and political questions of our day, but they spoke together frankly and gladly about these matters, because they were united upon one thing: Jesus and the resurrection. What indeed had brought together this representative gathering of all humanity was the very proclamation which had called into

> being the Church of Apostolic days: the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead -- that and nothing else. There is a universality and historical reality about Christ and his Church which has no parallel in the history of the world. Already he is confessed by men from the East and from the West, from the North and from the South, the Light of the world and the desire of all nations. And this acknowledged Lord is none other than the historical Jesus, of whom our Gospels tell, born, crucified, risen and ascended, one who is no myth, but part of the history of the world."[1]

Milligan set forth the evidence of the Resurrection in a memorable way. In the same manner in which he practiced the science of textual criticism, Milligan followed the external evidence within Scripture to the revelation of the risen Lord, who said,

> "Why are you troubled, and why do questionings rise in your hearts: See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have."[2]

The distinctively new being seen by the Apostles was the new humanity of the Lord -- evoking witness on the part of the Apostles.

Everyone knows today that "Christendom" has been shattered. No longer can apologetics count on people having a belief in God, much less on their having Christian presuppositions. Atheistic communism is simply the old rationalism and enlightment become honest.[3] Christ is viewed as myth, officially, crudely in the atheistic societies -- often unofficially, subtly in the culture of the "Christian West". Milligan's work has lost no relevance here. Either the disciples saw the Risen Lord or they did not.

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1. A. Richardson, History Sacred and Profane, Bampton Lectures for 1962, London, 1964, pp. 270-271.
2. Luke 24:38-40.
3. H. Gollwitzer, The Christian Faith and the Marxist Criticism of Religion, Saint Andrew Press, Edinburgh, 1970, p. 5.

Either they touched Him with their hands or they did not. Either the tomb was empty or it was not. Just here is the legitimate place for the science not only of textual criticism but of Christian evidential apologetics. Make no mistake. Neither the Lordship of Christ nor His resurrection can be proved, through the sole use of reason and evidence, to anyone. Milligan knew this. But he knew also, as men should know today, that belief in Christ and resurrection is truly rational under the guidance of the available evidence, that evidence can be used to falsify a theory that would deny the Resurrection, and that the Spirit of the incarnate risen Lord works <u>through</u> the media of the evidence -- not around it or in spite of it -- to give a demonstration of the Spirit to those who have ears to hear and eyes to see. Evidential apologetics may not be built by way of proof upon the presuppositions of a theology natural to all men, but it may be explicated scientifically as a philosophy or theology "natural" to the archetypal, given Object -- the incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended, Son of God. In other words, right interpretation is founded on testimony, witness. Every witness interprets, but every New Testament witness of the risen Lord shared in Him a common, bodily, space-time reference for their testimony, however he or she might have differed from the others in point of view. In short, this empirical level is necessary to all interpretation and theology. There is a deeper level, of course, even that of the trinitarian God's own Self-witness; and this deeper or higher level through the incarnate Son, must be the standard of all evidence, interpretation and theology. There also are the levels of statements and of judgments. But the point is that the evidential,

this-worldly level has its legitimate and essential place within the different hierarchical gradations of truth; this is the level on which Christ is to be presented to the world, through the simple offering up, before the world, of human testimony to the Lordship of the risen Jesus over the world, andby a loving ministry to the needs of men.

The resurrection of the incarnate Lord, among other things, guarantees the place of the empirical within this world; it sanctions the proper regard for evidence; it warns against the attempt to by-pass what Barth calls secondary objectivity. It militates against the false assumptions that this world or the rational patterns of events which constitute the entire Christ-event are merely objectifications of the self-understanding. The resurrection of our Lord is the knot that anchors the thread of world history in reality. Milligan remains relevant here. He systematically exposed the contradictions contained in theories produced to explain away our Lord's resurrection. Any attempt to explain away the Resurrection must ever be suspect, regardless of the splendour of the scholarly equipment of the one who proposes the explanation. In truth such an attempt is an attack on the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ and must inevitably come under His judgment. The world continues to doubt the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. "But <u>in fact</u> Christ has been raised from the dead..." "...if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."[1]

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1. I Cor. 15:20; Romans 10:9.

The movement from the fact of the Resurrection to Him who has been raised was and is a movement effected by the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father through the risen humanity of the ascended Son, who not only effects union between God and man but is that union. By virtue of the Incarnation, as it was developed through death and into resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father, the real loving pressure of the Presence of the Holy God among and in men was brought to pass in the Spirit.

The dynamic presence of the Lord Jesus Christ as the incarnate Son represents man to God and God to man in a two-way simultaneous movement by the Spirit coming to man from the Father through the Son and directing man through and in the Son to the Father. Thus man through the grace of God is inserted by the Spirit into the inner Trinitarian Being and action -- i.e., into the eternal fellowship of the Love of the Father for the Son and of the Son for the Father.

It is this present life in God of which Milligan was made more fully aware through his "German experience", and which became more refined and better defined following his return to Scotland. As we have learned, knowledge of God, for Milligan, became less and less inferential or sequential and more and more a present, experiential reality. This living knowledge was conveyed through both a trust in His living reality -- this he received, humanly speaking, from Neander and Tholuck -- and a disciplined study of the Holy Scriptures. William Milligan was primarily a student of the New Testament, though he did not neglect the Old. The reality of the

living knowledge of God he found in the present, living Lord Jesus Christ, incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended, at the Father's right hand. It was just this present Life in Christ that led Milligan to criticize the prevailing theological scheme and the prevailing mode of worship in Scotland. He saw that the theological framework tended to be legalistic, because, though derived from a genuine insight of the reformers, it was given a totalitarian control over all theology. He saw that the work of Christ in the past had been given the pre-eminence over the Person of His living Presence. Man's salvation had come to be looked upon merely as a logical inference from a past substitutionary work, which wrought a change in his legel position before God; but the present life of the Church and her members in union with God was neglected. This theology had come to affect the conception of the Church and sacraments. Christ Himself was in the background and a legalism had gained control of men's minds.

> "So long as we occupy ourselves solely or even mainly with legal relations, the Redeemer who constitutes these is not embraced by us in that light in which he appears in the New Testament. He is there a spiritual Person who unites His people to Himself by a real transmission of His Spirit to them that they may be identified with Him, and He with them. But this transmission cannot be made ours without a spiritual activity of the soul which we do not naturally possess, and which must be freely bestowed upon us as a gift. In other words, Christ cannot be to us the Redeemer that He is unless He be as much our religious representative as our legal substitute, then only do we receive Him in the completeness of His character and work when we behold in Him One whose representation of us is made real by His importation to us of His Spirit in the very act of our receiving Him."[1]

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1. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, p. 347.

Thus only, according to Milligan, is justice done to the principle of faith and to the real ground of our confidence in God, for faith is trust in a Person, as the Object of faith, and is grounded not on our reasoning or our feeling but in the merciful God Himself, who acts out of sheer grace for our salvation.[1]

Assurance was ever a problem of those who were entwined in a theology of merely legal relations. Such persons were forever anxious as to whether they were among the elect; and they mistakenly sought assurance in reasoning and in feeling; thus they were led away from looking unto Jesus and His mercy. The communion table was "fenced" and usually only those who were convinced inwardly that they had accepted Christ qualified to partake of the Meal. But Milligan saw the problem and the mistake.

> In the Sacraments Christ..."is by His own appointment 'represented, sealed, and applied to believers'. They are channels of His grace, so that when we seek for assurance of salvation, we are to find it in what He does for us, and not in any inward persuasion of our own that we have accepted Him. Such a persuasion enthusiastic or presumptuous persons easily find, and are too frequently puffed up; the modest miss, and are too frequently thrown into agony or despair. Christ Himself is with and in His Sacraments, to make them not only a sign, but a seal to us of 'engrafting into Christ, or remission of sins by His blood, and regeneration by His Spirit, of adoption and resurrection unto eternal life' (Larger Catechism, Question 165)."[2]

Milligan believed that the death of Christ had been brought into the controlling position as a legal transaction in isolation from the Given of Christ's living and life-giving presence. When detached from the One who said, "Fear not, I am the first and the

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1. Ibid. pp. 347, 348.
2. Ibid. p. 348.

last, and the living one, I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades", the Gospel is subsumed by the Law. Milligan rightly saw that Christ's death was included in the Life He offered to the Father, the Life that was won through death, the life which He even now is offering up to the Father on our behalf. "In Him is Life". But when we see Christ in this perspective we know that we have received our sight from Him. Whatever view we had before was blindness.

The concept of "offering" best summed up for Milligan the basic life-through-death motif of the New Testament. He viewed Christ's offering as His chief priestly function. Of the three offices of prophet, priest, and king, it was the office of Priest that was fundamental; and it was through His humanity that Christ, as Priest, once for all effected the atonement and is even now giving effect to it as He, both Priest and Victim, is engaged in offering Himself, and us in Him, to the Father.

E. Milligan's Influence and Relevance

Milligan's work on the resurrection, ascension, and heavenly priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ served to renew the worship of the Church and to conform it more closely to the nature of Jesus Christ. As we have learned, the separation of grace and nature, the turning of covenant into contract, and the conception of limited atonement tended to detract from the triumphant grace of God in Jesus Christ and put the emphasis on what man must do to fulfil his side of the contract or to know that he is one of the elect. The seeking of assurance and the performance of duties placed the

mighty acts of God and the Person of Christ in the background. With a breach made upon the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ it was easier to import into theology and politics such ideas as the light of nature, the equality of all men before natural law, man's contractual rights as members of a covenanted nation, individual rights and human liberty. Any required or proposed forms of worship smacked of an infringement of liberty and conjured up fears of "the divine right of kings", the papacy, and Erastianism. Any attempt to reinstate the old reformed worship was identified with episcopacy and viewed as an innovation. Read prayers were regarded as "priestly"; "free" prayers were identified with man's genuine liberty. The Sacraments were looked upon chiefly as seals of the individual's personal faith or repentance.[1]

1. The Church's Worship

Any idea that the basic forms of public worship might be given objectively in the person and work of Christ was foreign to the thinking of the individual members of the Church. Undoubtedly this obscuration of the true nature of worship was due to the ignorance of the role of the humanity of Christ within His continuing Self-offering before the Father. The work of Milligan supplied the need of a more full-orbed conception of the Person of Christ in His three-fold office, especially in the office of Priest. The objectivity of worship was found in the sole Priesthood of the risen, ascended

1. See J.B. Torrance, paper on the "Theological Background of Worship in Seventeenth Century Scotland"; and G.W. Sprott, The Worship of the Church of Scotland during the Covenanting Period, 1638-1661, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1893.

Christ. Through union with Christ by the Spirit the Church's worship could be viewed as something that actually is done in response to Christ's sacrifice on man's behalf; and within the continuing self-offering of Christ, the whole response of worship could be seen as taking place within and by means of the eternal Trinity. Thus the objective corporateness of public worship was set forth over against the false conception of the church's worship being the self-projected expressions and desires of a group of like-minded individuals who have come together through voluntary association. It was this emphasis on the sole Priesthood of Christ and the corporate priesthood of His Church that provided the right answer on the one hand to an individualistic interpretation of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and, on the other, to an inordinate fear of priestcraft. Milligan showed that the remedy lay not in doing away with the idea of priesthood but in the right conception of the priesthood grounded in the sole Priesthood of Christ, in His once-for-all sacrifice and His continuing offering of Himself to the Father on our behalf. In dealing with the objects of the Scottish Church Society, he wrote:

> "Hence the value of the special object Number twelve; 'the deepening in the laity of a due sense of their priesthood'. One might have thought that the mention of the 'laity' here was itself sufficient to dispel unjust suspicions...to revive on the part of all who have been baptised into Christ this almost extinct faith and consciousness of their distinctive standing and vocation as a holy priesthood in Him (I Peter 2:5), is one of the most urgent objects to which the Society can set its hand."[1]

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1. W. Milligan, The Scottish Church Society, Some Account of its Aims, J. Gardner Hitt, Edinburgh, 1893, pp. 10, 11.

In Milligan's view the basic forms of worship are seen to be anchored in the inherent rationality of Christ's divine-human response. Thus worship manifests the very essence of the Church in the glorification of God and in the ministering priesthood of the Church corporate. Here, too, the special order of ministry within the Church is viewed as the appointment of the Lord Himself, immediately by His Spirit and mediately through the Church in the setting aside of those who should become, in Milligan's phrase, "servants of the priesthood".[1] Milligan followed Scripture and Calvin in the conception of the priestly service of the Church being grounded in the continuing Priesthood of Christ; and his insistence on the Church's having the form of a servant is truly Biblical, Catholic, and relevant. It is through the worship of her Lord and the humble, loving service of the world that the Church bears witness to the sole Lordship and Priesthood of Christ.

Milligan had long been a member of the Church Service Society, the purpose of which was the improvement, along Catholic, Reformed lines, of Church worship; and he was instrumental in the founding in 1893 of the Scottish Church Society, which magnified the risen, ascended Lord and the great Catholic doctrines grounded in Him, as the centre of worship and the inspiration of priestly service.

Milligan's influence as a revered professor at Aberdeen was felt by many young students and fellow ministers. An indication of his influence on his colleagues in the ministry is the dedication

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1. W. Milligan, "The Ministerial Priesthood", The Expositor, third series, Vol. X, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1889, p. 23.

of G.W. Sprott's standard work, The Worship and Offices of the Church of Scotland:

To the
Rev. William Milligan, D.D.
Professor of Divinity and Biblical Criticism in the University
of Aberdeen, Convener of the Committee of the
Church of Scotland on Pastoral Theology,
and Moderator Designate of the
General Assembly
Who in a time of unbelief, schism, and confusion,
has witnessed for Catholic Truth,
Unity, and Worship
This Volume
is inscribed by his obliged friend
the Author.[1]

Two of Milligan's students will be mentioned in regard to worship. The first is James Cooper, who -- it might be said -- was his most devoted disciple.

> "For Cooper everything was redeemed, however, by the occupation of the Criticism Chair by Dr. William Milligan. In him he found a teacher and a man literally after his own heart, while in Cooper the teacher had a pupil who became a dear and intimate friend. Cooper could never say enough of his debt to Milligan...
>
> Alone of his professors Dr. Milligan showed some consciousness of the need of such training (for the actual work of the ministry) and offered to conduct (out of class hours) practical exercises in homiletics and liturgies of a primitive sort...
>
> In November (1869) Dr. Milligan's 'reading class' is repeatedly mentioned -- studying, for example, 'St. Chrysostom on the Priesthood -- the interest of it increases with every chapter'."[2]

Cooper made a special study of reformed and catholic forms of worship. He was a prominent member of the Church Service Society,

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1. G.W. Sprott, The Worship and Offices of the Church of Scotland, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1882.
2. H.J. Wotherspoon, James Cooper, A Memoir, Longmans and Green, London, 1926, pp. 60, 61, 62, 63.

the Aberdeen Ecclesiological Society, and secretary of the Scottish Church Society. He became professor of Ecclesiastical History at Glasgow and continued to exert a powerful influence in bringing the Church of Scotland into a more vivid awareness of her historical rootage, her priestly nature and her need of a more frequent celebration of the Eucharist.

We recall what Milligan told Cooper shortly before he died:

> "...that 'the greatest thing which the Church of Scotland had to do was to restore the weekly Eucharist', and that withholding that opportunity from the flock 'was putting a tradition of men in place of the Word of God'."[1]

Milligan also influenced his own son, Oswald, to make a special study of worship. Dr. Oswald Milligan served as the convener of the Committee on Public Worship and Aids to Devotion in obedience to an instruction of the General Assembly given in 1936.[2] It was this Committee that prepared The Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland, published in 1940 and approved by the General Assembly the same year. His own book, The Ministry of Worship, being the Warrack Lectures for 1940, provides a summary of his conception of worship.

> "In public worship something is done in common with others in response to what God has done for us in Jesus Christ."[3]

It may be noted that, though this view was a great improvement on the generally prevailing one in giving great weight to the

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1. Ibid. p. 210.
2. O.B. Milligan, The Ministry of Worship, Oxford U. Press, London, 1941, pp. 60, 61.
3. Ibid. p. 14.

objectivity of worship and its nature as response to the objective realities in Christ, it fails to make it unmistakeably clear that our response is within and taken up by the prior and continuing human response of our Lord in His priestly self-oblation. This latter emphasis is displaced by a starting point in the "God-consciousness" of the worshipper.[1]

In regard to worship we must not forget Milligan's urgent reminder that JOY is or should be an elemental characteristic of public worship and that the confession of sin could claim no part in the older service books. Praise lifted up to the risen Lord and joy in Him should be the chief marks of worship.

> "This...has been the spirit of the Church, in so far as she has expressed it in her Service-books, throughout all her history. 'Lift up your hearts unto the Lord'; 'We have lifted them up unto the Lord'...
>
> Here again, accordingly, we are led to the thought of the glorified Redeemer. His life on earth was praise; and when, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the sacred writer brings Him before us 'crowned with glory and honour', surrounded by His people, it is in the words of the Psalmist, 'In the midst of the congregation will I sing Thy praise'. Suffering from many weaknesses and trials, the Church on earth has much to ask for. Even in heaven she will have constant need of that prayer which is the longing of the heart after the fountain of all goodness and beauty. But the first thought which she associates with Him in whom she stands is praise; and the more fully the Spirit of her Lord becomes her Spirit, the more must she feel that the keynote of her worship is not prayer for blessings needed in the future, but adoration and thanksgiving for those that have been made hers already."[2]

In a paper entitled "The Place of Jesus Christ in Worship" the Rev. J.B. Torrance has listed "some weaknesses and dangers in

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1. Ibid. p. 10.
2. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, pp. 301, 302.

much contemporary worship as I see it".

> "(1) The danger of making worship a two-dimensional thing and of short-circuiting the role of the humanity of Christ."[1]

In making clear to the reader the continuing self-oblation of our Lord in heaven Milligan showed the essential "third dimension" of worship; thus both the objectivity and the objective subjectivity of worship were shown to be grounded in the God-given incarnate Son.

Even our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving is a participation in, and a follow-up of, the prior and continuing High Priestly sacrifice and offering of our Lord. We are never thrown back on our own resources.

> "(2) The danger of so emphasising the presence of the divine Christ that we lose sight of the human Christ."[2]

Milligan's emphasis on the office of priesthood in Christ brought into greater prominence the integral role of the continuing humanity of Christ and its sacramental significance over against the prevailing concentration on the Word. In this way the whole Christ, clothed in His gospel, might the better be recognized and appreciated. In this manner, also, the grace of the Lord is magnified.

> "(3) It is possible in worship to emphasise the Work of Christ (in an event theology) which loses sight of the Role of the Person of Jesus Christ, as our High Priest."[3]

It may be stated without hesitancy that the very motive behind the writing of The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord

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1. J.B. Torrance, "The Place of Jesus Christ in Worship", paper distributed to class, p. 15.
2. Ibid. p. 16.
3. Ibid. p. 17.

was simply that of enabling the reader to know that the work of Christ accomplished once for all in His earthly life and death is continued now in the same Person through His life surrendered to, and won out of, death; and that our worship is grounded in the present, living Person of our High Priest.

> "(4) Worship and the language of worship are not simply expressive of ourselves."[1]

Again, Milligan's continual pointing to the incarnate, risen, ascended Lord in his active Priesthood helps us to see that true worship is not what we as individuals do or say "on our own" after what God in Christ has done for us. Rather, a basic pattern and a present power of response have been and are given to us in the Person of Jesus Christ and His continuing human response of worship of the Father.[2]

For Milligan the formal and subjective references of worship were always under the control of the objective reference to Jesus Christ and through Him into the full Trinitarian context.

If there be any doubt as to the relevance, as well as the correctness, if not the influence, of Milligan's views on worship, one need only glance at the "Statement on the Ministry of Word and Sacraments" of the Panel on Doctrine, General Assembly, 1963. On every point -- the centrality of Jesus Christ, the corporate ministry of worship and mission, the special ministry within this corporate priesthood, the needed conformity to apostolic teaching

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1. Ibid. p. 17.
2. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, pp. 307, 308.

and practice, the central place of the Eucharist and the need for its more frequent celebration in faithfulness to apostolic teaching and practice -- on each of these points, Milligan gave a clear and positive word.

2. The Church's Unity

The works of Milligan are as relevant to Church unity as they are to Church worship, and for the same reason. The objective, given reference is the incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended Lord Jesus Christ, whom the Church is commissioned to represent in this world. In Milligan's parlance, the ideal has been realised, actualised in Jesus Christ; through union with Him by the Spirit the Church, His Body, exhibits Him to the world. He is One; the Church is one. His Oneness with the Father was shown on earth and is now seen in heaven by the saints and the angels; therefore, the unity of the Church on earth is to be a visible unity in some distinctive and appreciable sense, in one form or another. Incarnate union is a visible union, a reconciled and reconciling union.

Charles Wordsworth, Bishop of St. Andrews, Dunkeld, and Dunblane, who had come to know Milligan on the Revision Company, wrote to him in 1880:

> "No truer words were ever spoken than some which I see you are reported to have used in your last Croall lecture. 'To speak of making the world believe in a risen Lord by mere Bible circulation or missionary exertion was to waste time and strength, unless it were attended by the spectacle of Unity', etc.
>
> I have often said the same; but, as coming from one in your position, I rejoice to think it is infinitely more

likely to carry weight. I also quite agree with you that there has been 'too much speaking about unity and too little action'."[1]

Only unity provides the strength for a truly effective mission; though it is equally true to say that mission makes the Church more aware of the need for unity. At this point one can see how the Westminster Confession's identification of the invisible Church with the definite number of the elect and the visible church with the mass of the baptized would militate against world mission and tend to diminish the sin of schism. As long as the unity of the Reformed Church -- "fully established and declared to be the only true Church of Christ within the realm" -- remained unbroken it was not too difficult to hold that the Church of Scotland represented the Church Catholic in Scotland.[2] It was a visible unity. Men did not need to be told of it but saw it themselves and acknowledged the reality of the Church's unity. And even when in 1610 Episcopacy was restored and no one, without episcopal ordination and a promise to obey the bishop "in all things lawful", was allowed to enter the ministry (and the General Assembly not being permitted to meet for twenty years), even then men such as "...Patrick Simson, Robert Bruce, John Davidson, the Melvilles, and Calderwood... never dreamed of seceding, still less of setting up a rival communion".[3] There followed the National Covenant of 1638 in reaction to the

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1. J. Wordsworth, The Episcopate of Charles Wordsworth, Longmans, Green, London, 1899, p. 226.

2. See G.W. Sprott, The Doctrine of Schism in the Church of Scotland, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1902.

3. Ibid. p. 11.

attempt by Charles I to force a liturgy and a Book of Canons, by Act of Parliament, on the Church. Then came the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643, an attempt to enforce uniformity of Church polity within the three realms. Still the Church of Scotland was against schism. Then, when in 1650 Cromwell overwhelmed the Scottish Covenanters and his army occupied Scotland, Church unity came to an end;

> "The first rent in our Church was made when Rutherfurd and twenty-two others protested against the lawfulness of the Assembly which met at St. Andrews in 1651 and then left the House. Douglas, on whom Henderson's mantle has fallen, said this protestation was the highest breach of all the articles of the Covenants.
> ...the Protesters were irreconcilable, and they were the chief cause of the overthrow of Presbytery in 1661 and the undoubted prototypes of all Presbyterian dissent."[1]

We will recall that Milligan elected to remain in the Church of Scotland at the Disruption because of his belief as to the nature of the Church, and of Christ's Headship. His later Scriptural and doctrinal studies only confirmed this belief in the essential unity of the Body of Christ and the need of making this unity visible. Milligan's moderatorial address of 1883 was a bold and inspiring call for visible union of the Churches in Scotland, demanded by the very nature of the Body of the Risen Lord.

In the same year Milligan had incurred the displeasure of some who were working for a General Presbyterian Alliance, by indicating that he regarded such efforts towards a pan-Presbyterianism "with suspicion". Professor W.G. Blaikie of Edinburgh, editor of

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1. Ibid. pp. 16, 17, 18.

The Catholic Presbyterian, took him to task:

> "It is certain that Dr. Milligan...has given currency to the idea that he desires a union between the Established Churches of Scotland and England. If Dr. Milligan seriously contemplates such a step, the Presbyterian Council will certainly be in his way...
>
> We are Presbyterian by conviction, but without prejudice and without bigotry; and we can conceive no greater evil to the northern part of the island, than that any of its churches, whether Established, Free or United Presbyterian, should relax its hold on what is really strong and Scriptural in its Presbyterianism, for the sake of alliance with the Church of England, albeit that Church enjoys so much worldly favour, and in social influence is so wonderfully strong."[1]

Milligan's answer is revealing in that he shows himself as favouring Church union across denominational lines in the same geographical area as more truly ecumenical than an alliance among churches having the same polity, whether it be in the same geographical territory or trans-national. The true face of the Kirk is more truly restored by Church reunion within a nation than by extending the facial paralysis within or across the national boundary. Of course, since Milligan wrote, reunion has taken place between the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church, and the World Presbyterian Alliance has its regular meetings; but union has yet to be effected among the several communions in Scotland. What Milligan had to say in his answer to Blaikie is, therefore, still pertinent. After stating that he did not have in view the Church of England but the Episcopal Church in Scotland and that the great need was reunion of the Church of Christ in Scotland (apart from the idea of disestablishment, which in itself

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1. The Catholic Presbyterian, Vol. X. July-Dec. 1883, Nisbet, London, pp. 51, 52.

was "insignificant"), he went on to say:

> "My plea is that the Christian Church is weakened, and that the Christian religion is dishonoured, by our divisions to an extent unfitting us for the simple and earnest discharge of our most sacred duties, and depriving us of that fulness of blessing from the Great Head of the Church which might otherwise be ours.
>
> The thought of Christianity as a positive revelation from God is at this moment dying out among us with a rapidity which fills one with alarm and consternation; and it is in great measure so dying out because our contentions have defaced and prostrated in the dust that Church of Christ to which our Lord committed the guardianship of His truth, and which He commissioned, in one form or another of visible unity, to be the messenger of His mercy to men. Until such time as there springs up in our minds a true conception of what the Church of Christ really is in her organic unity and is in her outward manifestation of herself as the body of Christ, I cannot but think that the efforts which the Pan-Presbyterian Council proposes to itself will be largely, if not wholly, in <u>vain</u>. They will even be apt to mislead. That Council has not yet risen to the idea of the unity of the Church of which I have spoken. It is occupied with the idea of alliance between the Presbyterian bodies alone. Even were it to rise above the conception of alliance, it could not, from its very nature, go beyond that of a great Presbyterian unity upon the present basis of a Presbyterian System ...My difficulty connected with the Pan-Presbyterian Council is, that its aim is too restricted. When alliance, or any tendency to union, is spoken of, I cannot see the Scriptural character of the restriction made by it. It ought to embrace all the branches of the Reformed Church of Christ in Scotland. The episcopal Church is one of these; and, the moment we speak of union, we are bound to embrace them all, unless they deliberately exclude themselves.
>
> ...The cry, 'Scotland for Presbyterians', is to my mind one without a principle to rest on; while it, at the same time, contains in itself the first elements of that persecuting spirit of which our past history affords on all sides too many illustrations. The only cry that can be justified is 'Scotland for the Church of Christ'.
>
> ...What we want is not an intensification of the Presbyterian spirit, but more superiority to cries and echoes of cries which seeking after truths higher than all their present systems, and in which these systems might, with infinite advantage to them all, be merged...
>
> As a general rule I cannot but shrink from all combinations in favour of any particular 'ism', whether the combination be Pan-Presbyterian or Pan-Anglican. To combine for the purpose of acknowledging our deficiencies, confessing our

> shortcomings, and striving after something so much better than we are, that it would be worthwhile to perish for the sake of reaching it, is a very noble aim. But that is not the ordinary aim of combinations in favour of particular party-systems, and I feel that it is not the aim of the Pan-Presbyterian Council."[1]

Could any other ecumenical statement be more relevant than the above, or more scientific? Christianity is set forth as a positive revelation through Scripture, in conformity with Scripture. The Given is the Lord Jesus Christ. The true nature of anything is viewed in relation to the Given. The basic issue is the nature of the Church, which is to be determined by its relation to Jesus Christ. The Church is related organically to Jesus Christ, who is the great Head of the Church. Christ is one, His Body is one. The unity of the Church is organic and in some form visible, as the Head is visibly one. The Church, being in organic union with Him who is the Truth, is as the guardian of the Truth responsible to the Truth for the communication of His mercy and forgiveness to men. Her visible unity is testimony to reconciliation between God and man, and among men. But what are the facts of the Church's existence among men? We see divisions; we witness contentions; these things account for the Church's weakness and dishonour the Lord, whose full blessing is thereby withheld. The Church, thus defaced and prostrated, becomes a poor medium of the positive revelation of God. The Truth of God is refracted, distorted and obscured before men. Transparency becomes opacity. In this context any opposition to real reunion of the Church in the name of an alliance or

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1. Ibid. pp. 238, 239, 240.

federation or even union of Churches holding the same form of government is a clear indication of failure to rise to the true idea of union. In this partial view the starting point cannot be the given nature of the Church in the Lord; rather this is a far too restricted aim, which can hardly claim Scriptural justification. To claim that any particular form of Church government inherently belongs to a nation is to confuse the Holy Spirit with the spirit of denominationalism, or the spirit of nationalism, even the spirit of persecution. Is this not a perennial danger to any Church whose identification with the nation is not for the purpose of helping to lead that nation into the Spirit of reconciliation with all men and nations and Churches in the name of the Lord but rather to give strength and a "Christian" justification to party spirit and a narrow nationalism? How even more obviously relevant are Milligan's words today! The only cure for ecclesiastical, national or individual paranoia is a strong dose of genuine objectivity, to be found only in the Lord Jesus Christ as communicated by the Holy Spirit. Only through a thinking from out of Him who is the same yesterday, today, and forever are we enabled to overcome our prejudices and party-spirits. Only by knowing ourselves to be members of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church do we see all other loyalties in proper perspective. Milligan could never have been accused of being a disloyal Scot; quite the contrary. But he did know where the higher loyalty lay.

> "Further it ought to be remarked that it is the aim of the [Scottish Church] Society to deepen in the breast of all her members a livelier feeling of the vocation of the Church

> of Scotland as a part of the Catholic Church. The Society does not forget the fact, that the Church of Scotland is a National Church...While this, however, is true, there is another and a greater truth. Nationality is no mark of the Church of Christ. Catholicity is. We have to recognise that we are one with all the faithful during the centuries which preceded the Reformation, as well as during those which followed it, and that we share a common right with the Catholic Church to all of the good which she has accumulated. We have to learn more than we do that they and we are branches of the One Vine."[1]

Milligan was able to come to the conclusion that in principle, i.e. in Jesus Christ, there is nothing to prevent the reunion of all separated Churches of Christ. Starting in Christ and being willing to be led by the Spirit, who is mediated to us through the risen humanity of Christ and who at the same time testifies to Christ, the Churches, by penitential thinking, should be able in meekness to allow the Lord to effect some kind of visible reunion. To refuse to attempt this, on the basis of any other principle, is to be guilty of disobedience to the One Lord. Milligan himself engaged in the right kind of thinking, particularly in the area of the ministerial priesthood.[2] Starting with the sole Priesthood of the ascended Lord, Milligan brings to view the corporate priesthood of the Church, as Christ's body; then he goes on to show that the ministerial priesthood is a special order within the corporate priesthood, appointed by the Lord immediately through the Spirit and mediately through the Apostolate by way of the historical structure of the Church. This special group, the presbyterate, serves the

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1. W. Milligan, "The Scottish Church Society, Some Account of its Aims", Gardner Hitt, Edinburgh, 1893, p. 12.

2. See W. Milligan, The Expositor, third series, Vol. X, "The Ministerial Priesthood", Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1889, pp. 1-23.

Lord through ministering to His body, in subordination to that Body. Bishops, as presbyters, do not constitute a second, original line of grace; indeed, a "line of grace" is misconceived if understood apart from a continuing, immediate relationship to the Lord by the Spirit. The New Testament does not speak of an individual priest, other than Christ, over or in the Church. The emphasis, therefore, must be on the ministerial priesthood. Just as our Lord came to serve, not to be served, so His church is a ministerial priesthood. How much more then should the mark of that special order within the corporate priesthood be that of service, διακονία. Thus, in Milligan's words, the minister is "the servant of the priesthood". Within this context of the special order of servants of the corporate priesthood there is room for a servant of the servants of the priesthood -- i.e. a bishop or superintendent. As long as the corporate priesthood and the ministerial priesthood are viewed under the superintendency of the sole priesthood of Christ, then all is properly "priestly". This was recognized by Calvin and Knox and Milligan.[1] It also was seen by James Cooper, Milligan's foremost disciple. Cooper was constantly at work tracing out for others the Catholicity of the Church, which includes some form of episcopacy. In a letter to a Miss Clark in 1852, referring to Milligan and his moderatorial address, he wrote:

> "I am so glad you liked Dr. Milligan's closing Address; I was very proud of him and of it. How far some of those who

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1. See also T.F. Torrance, Royal Priesthood, Scottish Journal of Theology, Occasional Papers No. 3, Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh, 1955.

> applauded him understood or agreed with what he said I do not know, but the effect of his utterance is not likely to pass away soon. And those of us who are longing for Reunion in Scotland have been greatly cheered by (I think I may say almost) all the utterances of Scottish Episcopalians, who have received Dr. Milligan's words about them in a very cordial manner."[1]

James Cooper definitely had caught the vision of the Church Catholic, which accompanies the vision of the Great Head of the body Catholic, and he was anxious that the fragmented visage of the Church should coalesce more in line with its true character.[2] He wrote to Dr. Sprott on the need of organizing a Scottish Reconciliation Society:

> "The moment is favourable for approaching Episcopalians. They are learning the need of Presbytery to supplement Episcopacy. The new Primate [the Rt. Rev. Edmund White Benson, D.D.] said last week to Dr. Milligan(this is private) that he is quite prepared to acknowledge the orders of our Church, only for the future we would need a modified Episcopacy.
>
> ...If people would only hope that a union with Episcopalians was possible on a fair basis, it would be immensely popular. Whereas so long as the avenue seems shut in that direction, men will inevitably try for union in other directions, at the expense of all that remains of Catholic doctrine and practice in the Church..."[3]

The implication here is that Milligan himself was involved in quite a bit of reunion talk with the bishops of the Episcopal Church. Indeed, Cooper wrote in 1886 that "...Dr. Milligan is away

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1. H.J. Wotherspoon, James Cooper, A Memoir, p. 130.
2. See J. Cooper, "The Revival of Church Principles in the Church of Scotland", Mowbray, London, 1895; also see J. Cooper, Kindness to the Dead, "The Ascension of Our Lord", pp. 20-30; Priests of God and of Christ", pp. 31-42, Macmillan, London, 1924.
3. H.J. Wotherspoon, James Cooper, A Memoir, p. 137.

bishoping in the West Highlands".[1]

Cooper's continuing concern for the reunion of the Church on a truly Catholic basis was given a detailed and eloquent expression in his own moderatorial address at the close of the General Assembly of 1917. Beginning in the Lord he developed the Scriptural and Conciliar basis of the Church Catholic and applied this understanding to what he believed to be the needs of the day. There is the well-known reference to Milligan's words on the weekly Eucharist as the most greatly needed reform. He continued:

> "One would think sometimes from our practice in regard to it that we were ordained not to give our fellow servants their meat in due season, but to withhold it from them."[2]

Two other needed reforms, as they appeared to Cooper, were a reversion "to the Apostolic Diaconate, and the no less Apostolic Laying on of hands in confirmation of the baptismal gift and vow."[3]

There follows a truly courageous word -- the year was 1917 -- which could only have been spoken by one who, following Milligan, saw Catholicity rather than nationality as a true mark of the Church of Christ:

> "It may be doubted whether any purely National Church has been able to interpose an effective veto on a war of aggression begun by its own nation ... we have ourselves been content for the most part to accept the maxim, 'My country, right or wrong..."[4]

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1. Ibid. p. 148.
2. J. Cooper, "Our Sacred Heritage", Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1917, pp. 28, 29.
3. Ibid. p. 29.
4. Ibid. p. 34.

As did his mentor, so did Cooper deplore the separation between his Church and the Episcopal Church of Scotland. He repeated Milligan's words from his moderatorial address in 1882, urging reunion. He delivered addresses in King's College London in February, 1918, and in St. Paul's Cathedral in April of the same year. The first, entitled "Reunion -- a Precedent from Scotland", was an argument for the visible reunion of the Churches with reference to the "Precedents of 1610", which showed the possibility of combining the main features of the Episcopal and Presbyterian Systems.[1] The second address, entitled "Possibilities of Closer Relations between the Church of England and the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland", includes the following:

> "I urged at the time what the late Dr. Milligan had urged in 1882, that our duty to Christ, and the needs of the country, required us to include in our invitation the smaller Presbyterian bodies, and the Scottish Episcopal Church. I was overruled. The smaller Presbyterian bodies were considered hopeless. Men who did not know the Scottish Episcopal Church as I do would not, at that time, believe that it would listen to us."[2]

In William Milligan, James Cooper had found a teacher true to the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ. Milligan was a living example to Cooper of what it means to be truly Catholic, truly reforming, and truly evangelical. Such must have been the impression he made on many of his students. Cooper was chosen simply as an outstanding example of the kind of student Milligan's teaching and example helped to produce.

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1. J. Cooper, Reunion: A Voice from Scotland, Robert Scott, London, 1918, pp. 3-60.
2. Ibid. p. 78.

> "Milligan's death in December, 1893, came upon Cooper as a veritable bereavement...Cooper's friendship with him had lasted from his college days, growing always closer; it was more than friendship -- it was the devotion of a disciple. He leaned on Dr. Milligan and counted association with him one of the chief enrichments and privileges of his life. The depth of his sense of loss could be measured by his silence -- it was a subject of which one did not hear him speak, and his letters have hardly a reference to it."[1]

Though the Spirit of the Lord continues to witness among men and Churches to the unity of His Body, organic, visible unity has hardly manifested itself in any permanent way; for the same party-spirits continue to exert their unreconciled, divisive power, abetted by a press that thrives on such a spirit. Nevertheless, Christ is still Lord, the "top level" meetings continue to be held; and the ecclesiology of hope is sustained by such genuinely cooperative ventures as the Church in Livingston. There, testimony is given by, and to, the Spirit of reunion in a joint service rendered by ordained ministers of the Congregational Church, the Methodist Church, the Church of Scotland, and the Episcopal Church of Scotland. There, a Church exists, a Church visibly one; and it appears that this is the direction, without forsaking the top level conferences, in which the Churches should move. Men's needs are met. Prejudices are overcome at the grass-roots. The grace of reconciliation is exhibited before all eyes.

3. The Church's Confession

Just as the Church is commissioned to manifest a visible unity because her Lord is One, so is she commissioned to confess her Lord

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1. H.J. Wotherspoon, James Cooper, A Memoir, p. 176.

before the world because He confessed His Father before men. To the extent that the Church is indwelt by the Spirit of the risen Lord, to that extent will she witness a good confession. The Church confesses as the Spirit speaks through her of the things of Christ. By the Spirit Christ's Self-witness is translated into the Apostolic witness to Christ. It is this Apostolic deposit of Faith that becomes and remains for the Church the substance of her Confession.

As early as 1866 Milligan's essay on "Confessions of Faith" gave evidence of his concern with the relation of Confessions to the Church and to Scripture.[1] Following the Confession of Faith, he regarded the Bible as the final standard of appeal over against the "enthusiasm" that would subject the written Word to itself and over against a Church that claims supreme authority. This meant for Milligan, of course, that Confessions themselves must constantly submit to investigation in the light of Scripture.

> "It [Protestantism] regards the Bible alone, interpreted in the light of reason, and of those higher spiritual influences which will not be denied to those that ask them, as the final standard of appeal."[2]

Just as Milligan later would acknowledge that these spiritual influences were themselves to be submitted to the Holy Spirit, so was he to come to see more clearly that the Holy Scriptures themselves find their reference-point in the risen Lord, the Son of the Father. But even then he was aware that the doctrines of the

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1. W. Milligan, "Confessions of Faith", appended to The Decalogue and the Lord's Day, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1866.
2. Ibid. p. 179.

Confession were being used to restrict not only the doing of theology but also the scientific exegesis of Scripture.

> "...we are bound to prosecute our study of Scripture without being limited by the dogmatic conclusions of the past at all, and there is every reason to hope that such study will not be in vain. It is often indeed said that there is nothing new in theology. It should rather be said that, so long as theology is a living science, a thing not of the past only, but of the present -- a science coming home to man's immediate necessities -- it must always have something new in it."[1]

As we have seen, Milligan returned from Germany impressed by the freedom of theological speculation.[2] There the doing of theology was anything but hampered by the requirement of conformity to the numerous doctrines of a detailed Confession. He paid respect to that freedom without approving of all the theological conclusions. But he deplored the relative un-freedom of theologians in Scotland, due to the requirement of subscription to a whole theological system. Milligan knew that, with this kind of restriction, the practice of Church theology cannot be scientific. He traced this rigid way of looking at the Confession to "... the mechanical mode of looking at the Bible, which has marked all branches of the Protestant Church to the present hour."[3]

Milligan's career spanned a remarkable era, and it is a mistake to follow his development in isolation from his time. That era may be viewed from various perspectives. Natural science was seen as marching ever more triumphantly over the old medieval

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1. Ibid. p. 184.
2. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, p. 327.
3. Ibid. p. 323.

way of looking at the world; the Baconian induction had disturbed the Aristotelian syndrome. The "democratic principle" was at work like yeast in the mass of the people; the adult males of a congregation came to believe they had the right to call their minister. Authoritarianism was being questioned all along the line. Man's natural reason, employing the light of nature -- granted by the Westminster Confession of Faith as, it has been alleged, a justification of damnation[1] -- threatened to break loose altogether from its incarceration within the determinism of that insubordinate subordinate standard. A genteel agnostism had insinuated itself into the popularized version of natural science. Even the previously sacrosanct Authorized King James Version began to lose its kingly lustre and increasingly came to be regarded as, after all, only a version requiring revision. The presence of a myriad of various readings and the discovery of older documents challenged the hitherto impervious authority of the Received Text.[2] The industrial revolution, fostered by the machine, was drawing more and more people into the cities. The old roots were being cut. Men found themselves in environments not exactly conducive to human well-being. Seeking to escape what had been for many no more than a modified serfdom and to earn a decent day's wage, the people found themselves still at the mercy of the system, this time in the form of

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1. C.K. Robinson, "Philosophical Biblicism: The Teaching of the Westminster Confession concerning God, The Natural Man, and Revelation and Authority", Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol. 18, No. 1, March, 1965, Oliver & Boyd.
2. It is of interest to note that the authority was due as much to that most mechanical of all machines, the printing press, as it was to a royal authorisation.

an industrial barony. And the Auld Kirk began to appear to multitudes of the poor as indifferent to their plight, because too closely identified with the material interests of the ruling class. As a consequence the Church rapidly lost much of its influence among the working class. Milligan's concern for people led him to a more vivid awareness of the social dimensions of their plight and of the Church's involvement in these issues. In answer to an accusation that in seeking union with the Episcopal Church he was kowtowing to the upper class, he wrote:

> "No one can justly reproach me with a desire to conciliate the rich at the cost of the poor. I have rather to reproach myself with having, throughout the course of a lengthy ministry, gone perhaps too much in precisely the opposite direction."[1]

This "confession" of perhaps having served one class more than another highlights Milligan's concern for all men. His involvement in the social issues of the day was due not simply to his humanitarian impulse; rather was it the response to God's love for all men, embodied in the continuing priestly ministry of His Son, whose humanity all are intended to share.[2]

Indeed, his concern for all men led him to agree, in principle, with Wyclif's views on property:

> "Wyclif did not hold that every man's private property was his own, but that the Church's property belonged to the State. He applied his principle to the latter; but the principle covered all. That principle is expressed by the celebrated apothegm that 'dominion is founded on grace'; and the meaning is that no man, and no body of men, could claim an

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1. W. Milligan, The Catholic Presbyterian, Vol. X, July-Dec., 1883, p. 239.
2. A. Milligan, In Memoriam, William Milligan, D.D., Aberdeen U. 1894.

> absolute and inherent right to the goods possessed by them. All things belonged to God, and were granted by Him as fiefs are by a feudal superior. As originally bestowed they were forfeited by sin, but were restored by grace or mercy, on conditions opposed to sin, and which sin must again invalidate. It follows as a natural consequence that the man who uses his possessions ill forfeits them in principle, and ought to lose them...
>
> No man has in all circumstances an absolute right to what he has acquired or inherited. Why should we hesitate to say so?"[1]

If Milligan himself did not hesitate to say so, then one should have no difficulty in imagining the reaction such a view might have provoked from a portion at least of the propertied class.

On tracing Milligan's development as a theologian -- that is to say, as a man who does theology -- we cannot blink the fact that, all things considered, he showed himself to be on the side of Him, who though the same yesterday, today and forever, ministered -- and continues to minister -- to the real needs of the whole man, whether he be a revolutionary, a reactionary, or somewhere in between.[2] We know of Milligan's shepherd heart and his concern for the whole person, revealed by his community and educational work during his two pastorates and his efforts to meet the practical needs of his students at Aberdeen. There he continually visited the poor and the sick and encouraged his students to accompany him in this ministry. His long service on the Aberdeen Board of Education and his book on

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1. W. Milligan, "Wyclif and the Bible", Fort-nightly Review, Vol. XXXVII, new series, Jan. 1 - June 1, 1885, pp. 795-797.

2. Indeed, his ecclesiology and his liberal views on social issues provoked criticism from different quarters. Because he did not "come out" at the Disruption he was accused of preferring the comforts of patronage to the hardship of risking all for Christ. It was said that his stand on social issues prevented his receiving the principalship of the University. See A. Milligan, In Memoriam, William Milligan, D.D.

the Education of Women (which the writer has been unable to find) both indicate his concern for the peoples' betterment.

However, it was as a theologian that he rendered his most widespread and enduring service. Here the basic, etymological meaning of 'theologian' should be considered as primary, for Milligan's work was done within the sphere of the Word of God. This meaning includes his work as textual critic and teacher of the science of textual criticism, his contribution as interpreter and translator of God's Word, as well as his treatment of three great momenta in the life of our Lord -- His Resurrection, His Ascension, and His Heavenly Priesthood -- in union with His Body the Church. He was able through all this work to hold to the integrity of God's Word without falling to the temptation to undertake the seemingly valiant but nonetheless reactionary defense of the indefensible. If the external evidence indicated that a long revered Scriptural reading should go, then to protect it with the appearance of scholarship and out of "reverence" for God's Word were to commit what approaches the unforgiveable sin. If a theologian can expect no more than the charge of heresy to be levelled at conclusions which differ from peripheral confessional doctrines, then something must be done to distinguish the substance of the faith from that which is not of the substance. In the area of textual criticism and interpretation, Milligan enabled many students to give all honour to the scientific method without thereby suffering any loss of respect for the Word of God. Indeed the scientific method was seen simply as the method which respects truth above all and thereby gives the greatest honour

to Him who is Truth. When the substance of the Faith is distinguished by this same method, then theologians, locating their first allegiance in Him who is the Truth, are freed from the paralyzing grip of a system which claims what belongs only to the Lord, in order that they might the better enable the minds of contemporary men to conform not to a system as such (which indeed may be in error) but to the inner rationality of the incarnate Word. Milligan knew that creeds are necessary to the well-being of the Church. He knew, too, that there must be no false separation between form and substance, for a change in form inevitably alters the doctrine and thereby the understanding of the substance.[1] Theological freedom must not, therefore, be converted into licence. There is a Given; there are the facts. Only in genuine bondage to the Given can there be true freedom for theology.

Milligan came to see that the substance of the Faith is identical with the Lord Jesus Christ. Through the Apostolic Witness in Scripture both the simplicity and complexity of the Christian faith is discovered. The Father is revealed through and in the incarnate Son by the Spirit. In the end of the day it was the Holy Spirit, known through the risen humanity of the Word, who enabled Milligan to acknowledge the supremacy of the rationality of the incarnate Word over against any false identification of the Logos with man's mind or of the Creator Spirit with man's created spirit. He maintained the language of idealism, yes; but it was an idealism

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1. W. Milligan, "Confessions of Faith", pp. 175-176.

adapted to the Risen humanity of Christ. Faith was not for Milligan a self-understanding; nor was the explication of that Faith an objectification of his self-understanding. On the contrary, it was the repentant conforming of his mind to the objective rationality of the incarnate risen Word and the attempt to delineate this rationality as clearly and as persuasively as possible. Hence, in reacting to the form-full scheme of the Westminster Confession, one must not identify the Substance of the Faith with a formless spirit, whether it be the old Enthusiasm or its modern kinsman, existentialism.

Milligan, in his day, knew that making a distinction between the substance of the Faith and the entire confessional apparatus, without drawing up and expressing that substance, is no solution of the problem. His contribution towards the expression of the necessary distinction centred, as we have found, in the Person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who assumed flesh and underwent crucifixion but rose from out of the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Father and -- by the Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son -- incorporated the Church into union with His risen humanity. All of this involves forms of rationality adapted to the career of Christ in this world and to His continuing heavenly career, centred in His three-fold office of Priest, Prophet, and King. In these offices and under His Lordship the Church participates by the Spirit. Through the truly sacramental forms given substance by the Lord, the Church becomes an effective medium for the carrying on, by incorporation and growth, the priestly ministry of Christ in the world.

It was the humanistic self-assurance of men who ignored or denied their new humanity in Christ and sought to enlighten others to man's coming-of-age in the era of the advances of natural science, it was this proud individualism of the "liberated" man that most dismayed Milligan. He was not alone; and this shared disturbance, together with the desire to proclaim the old Catholic doctrines, gave rise to the Scottish Church Society in 1893.

In the following excerpts Milligan describes the Society, listing some of its aims. Note that each had been a continuing concern for him:

> "The first purpose of the Society is to 'defend and advance Catholic doctrine as set forth in the Ancient Creeds and embodied in the Standards of the Church of Scotland'...the doctrines of the Divinity, Incarnation, Atoning Death, Resurrection, Ascension and Second Advent of Him whom we call the Redeemer of the world, of the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in the Church, and of the place and value of the Divine Ordinances.
>
> '...generally to assert Scriptural principles in all matters relating to Church Order and Policy, Christian Work and Spiritual Life, throughout Scotland...the consistent affirmation of the divine being, supernatural life, and heavenly calling of the Church...the efficacy of the Sacraments'.
>
> Still a third purpose of the Society...has relation to the Church's attitude towards many of those social questions which are at present forcing themselves upon the minds of thoughtful men...Would the Church wish to be more successful in the future, she must look these social problems in the face, and must remember that she has to deal with those who create them quite as much as with those who suffer from them. She must gain the confidence of the poor, which she has in large measure lost.
>
> ...We are ever pleased with the approbation of the world, forgetting that there is nothing easier for a Church than to gain the world's favour. She has only to sacrifice her distinctive principles, to be diligent in everything by which the world is undisturbed, and, while preserving outward appearances, to conform to the world's ways, and the thing

> is done. 'Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you', is as true of the Church at large as of the individual believer."[1]

Herein we have the essence of Milligan's programme to hold the unchanging Catholic Faith and serve a changing world:

> "'The old order changeth, giving [sic]
> place to new,
> And God fulfils Himself in
> many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world'.
>
> God's people '...life up their eyes unto the heavens from whence cometh their aid'; and when they penetrate by faith within the veil, they behold there a living Lord presenting Himself and His Church in Him a continual offering to the Father. They see in Him the marks of sufferings endured even to death for men, that man might be brought into closest union with Him who is the Sum of all perfection and the Fountain of all love, who would enfold in His arms every wandering child of Adam, and bring him home to dwell in His love, with the rest, the peace, and the joy which it bestows."[2]

Without a doubt William Milligan was chosen to serve as the first president of the Scottish Church Society because he himself, of all the able, like-minded men of his day, most nearly embodied its purpose.

> "Dr. William Milligan was...the official figure-head. Living in an age of unbelief, schism, and confusion, he came forward as 'a witness for Catholic Truth, Unity and Worship'... Being Clerk to the General Assembly, his accession to the Society was of great value and gave the movement almost an official sanction. He was the first president and facile princeps. Dr. John Macleod used to say in his witty fashion, 'There was a man sent from God and his name was Milligan'."[3]

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1. W. Milligan, "The Scottish Church Society, Some Account of its Aims", Hitt, Edinburgh, 1893, pp. 5, 6, 9, 10.
2. Ibid. pp. 14, 16, 18, 19.
3. J.F. Leishman, Linton Leaves, including a Biography of Dr. Thomas Leishman and some sidelights on Catholic Reunion, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1937, pp. 141, 142.

One may the better appreciate the stature of Milligan by acquaintance with other members of the Society and with some of the works they themselves produced.

> "...by general consent, the original foster-fathers of the movement were Thomas Leishman of Linton, and George Washington Sprott, who each occupied the chair of the Society in immediate succession after the death of Milligan."[1]

The works of these man and of others, may justly be described as Christocentric, Catholic, Reformed, and Reforming. The authors, each from the perspective of his own specialized discipline, shared in the exhilarating discovery of the radical, living unity of the universal Church of Christ. Nothing had more effectively mediated this disclosure than the rediscovery of the humanity of our Lord in its risen, ascended newness. And nothing had served as a more clarifying aid, humanly speaking, to the attaining of this almost overwhelming awareness, than Milligan's focused witness to our living High Priest and His continuing Self-oblation. Milligan was the theologian of the movement.

G.W. Sprott employed his historical scholarship in tracing the roots of the Church of Scotland into the Church Catholic, thus providing factual information which in itself is a weighty argument for making visibly present the genuine unity of the Churches in Christ.[2] Sprott's polemic against the sin of schism is most effectively based on his

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1. Ibid. p. 146.

2. See G.W. Sprott, The Worship and Offices of the Church of Scotland, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1882; The Worship of the Church of Scotland during the Covenanting Period, 1638-1661, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1893; "The Church Principles of the Reformation", a Sermon preached before the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1877.

careful historical investigation.[1] Sprott, too, spoke on the aims of the Scottish Church Society:

> "The truth is, we are Scottish Churchmen as our fathers were. Like them, we believe that our Lord founded a Church as well as taught a religion, and that we are bound to obey Him in all things, in the things pertaining to the government and ordinances of His House, as well as in the precepts which He has given for the regulation of our private conduct.
>
> Now this is not new in Scotland; what is new is the extent to which the whole subject of the Church is now-a-days neglected...
>
> Many of the people have lost all idea of churchmanship, and love to the Church has grown cold...
>
> It is with lowering the doctrine of the Sacraments that unbelief has usually begun. This missing link in much that is called evangelical religion is the link of vital union with the Second Adam, including that bodily nexus with His glorified humanity, as signified and sealed in the sacraments, which Calvin held as dear as his life, and which has been so emphatically asserted in every standard of our Church since the Reformation...
>
> We need something more than a religious Society. We need a Church."[2]

The other "foster-father" of the Scottish Church Society was Thomas Leishman of Linton. He in his day was concerned, as are many today, with a drift away from belief in the Incarnation, the carrying through of the Incarnation by the Resurrection, and the continuing lively place constituted by the Lord in His risen humanity. In his day, too, Leishman was one of those who grieved over some of the most able of his colleagues' having been inveigled by a misconception of the postulates of natural science and its undeniable progress into denying that the Holy, eternal Word of God actually entered His own Creation, took upon Himself sinful flesh, carried it

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1. See G.W. Sprott, The Doctrine of Schism in the Church of Scotland, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1901.
2. G.W. Sprott, "The Aims of the Scottish Church Society", being an address at the fourth annual meeting of the Society at Edinburgh, Hitt, Edinburgh, 1896, pp. 3, 4, 6, 7, 11.

through death, and by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit -- in the new humanity of a bodily, space-time existence -- returned not void to the right hand of the Father.[1]

Thomas Leishman's chief published contribution to the Scottish Church Society's aim of "...Catholic Reunion on a large scale and the retention of the ancient Faith in the strictest sense of the word..." was his "...interpreting in a Catholic Sense the Westminster Standards".[2] His opening address at the second Conference of the Scottish Church Society was a plea for a continuing valiance for the truth in the face of charges of "ritualism" and flirting with Rome.

> "They take no note of a current of thought, wider, stronger, more fatal than any that is setting towards Rome. Not the Reformation only, but the Christian faith is being disowned ... We know our own minds. We disown all Roman doctrine, all, that is, which originated with Rome. Doctrine that Rome inherited, and the Reformers reasserted, we adhere to, as they did, not because it is Roman, but because it is apostolic and divine...
>
> Our desire is that she [the Church] may retain and, where need is, restore the best features of Scottish Christianity as it appeared when it emerged from the inevitable turmoil of reform...We shall better understand those times if we remember that in the eyes of our forefathers, more than in ours, unity was the normal condition of national religion."[3]

Leishman goes on to see the lapse into Socinianism as due to various causes. Chief among them are the lack of instruction in the

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1. J.F. Leishman, Linton Leaves, p. 184.
2. Ibid. p. 140. See also other works by T. Leishman: "Scotland as She Was and as She Is", Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1903; The Westminster Directory, intro. & notes by T. Leishman, Church Service Society, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1901; "The Moulding of the Scottish Reformation", Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1897; "The State and Prospects of the Church of Scotland", closing address of General Assembly, 1898, Hitt, Edinburgh.
3. T. Leishman, "Opening Address", The Divine Life in the Church, Scottish Church Society Conferences, Second Series, Vol. I, Hitt, Edinburgh, 1895, pp. 4, 5.

Nicene Creed and "the hymn that bears the name of Athanasius, and the neglect of Calvin's sacramental teaching", leading to the depreciation of Christ's death and resurrection, which are exhibited most efficaciously by the Sacraments.[1]

Leishman -- like Milligan, Sprott, and Cooper -- had come to the belief that at the bottom of the Church's weakness and the narrow view held by so many members of the Church was the lack of belief in the risen Christ, through whose risen humanity communion with His Church is established by the Holy Spirit.

In agreement with the foregoing was John Macleod of Govan.

> "...the Mercurius of the Society was John Macleod...Full of Celtic fire, he was, till prematurely cut down by death, the great orator, organiser, practical statesman and real inspirer of the movement. He convened and presided at the preliminary meetings; and the credit of having drafted the programme of the Scottish Church Society is his."[2]

In a sermon preached the Sunday after Milligan's death Macleod revealed how much he had learned from Milligan, whose books on our Lord's Resurrection, Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood he had regularly read for instruction and inspiration. Macleod's estimate of Milligan: "...beyond doubt, I think, the most enduringly influential Scottish Churchman of our time".[3] That Macleod had received the same insight, as had the others, into the significance of Christ's risen humanity is clearly and eloquently indicated by his two addresses on the Sacraments, published by the Scottish

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1. Ibid. p. 8.
2. J.F. Leishman, Linton Leaves, pp. 142, 143.
3. J. Macleod, "Judge Nothing Before the Time", Hitt, Edinburgh, 1894, p. 3.

Church Society. In the following passage Macleod expresses the essence of the meaning of the risen humanity of Christ as clearly and specifically as any similar passage it has been this writer's privilege to read.

> "His Resurrection was not merely a sign of the acceptance of His sacrifice, and of the unspeakable love of God to man (of which the Passion and Resurrection are alike manifestations), but was also an act accomplishing the redemption of our nature and its reconstruction, in a new, spiritual, and immortal condition -- involving spirit, soul, and body, -- and making it now capable of fulfilling perfectly, through the Holy Ghost, the Eternal purpose of God. Before proceeding to speak of Baptism, the Apostles, therefore, invariably preached the Risen Christ, and the import of His Resurrection...The entire period of the Forty Days in the post-resurrection ministry of our Lord may justly be regarded as having devoted to the endeavour, not so much to prove to the Apostles that He was risen from the dead, as rather to unfold to them, as His chosen witnesses, the mystery and glory of that absolutely new condition of manhood in which as the first-begotten from the dead, the first regenerate man, He had been raised through the operation of God...
>
> Why, then, in all these various pre-baptismal instructions, is this stress laid upon the Resurrection of our Lord? For two reasons. First, because in the Risen Christ we see the head and beginning of that new creation of God, of which all who are united with Him form part. In Him, as risen, we behold the pattern of our nature in that condition which is the true expression of God's original purpose in its Creation. God seeks not, be it said with reverence, to perpetuate our nature in the condition into which it has fallen, and which is, therefore, under the sentence of dissolution. He exhibits to us in Jesus Christ -- in the spiritual, incorruptible, and glorious condition of spirit, soul, and body in which He has been raised from the dead, and in which, while truly and forever man, He is yet capable of bearing the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, -- that we might, thereby, be better prepared to apprehend the distinctive functions on which He entered at His Ascension when He received authority to impart to such as were given to Him of the Father the fellowship alike of the eternal life on which He had entered in our nature, and also of the power and glory with which he had become endowed."[1]

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1. J. Macleod, "The Holy Sacrament of Baptism; the Place assigned to it in the Divine Economy of Grace, and the Present Need in Scotland of Explicit Teaching in Regard to It", The Divine Life in the Church, Scottish Church Society Conferences Second Series, Vol. I, Hitt, Edinburgh, 1895, pp. 32, 33.

What John Macleod wrote on the significance of the Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Christ in regard to Baptism and the Eucharist is equally clear and compelling.[1]

It was just this vision of the heavenly Priest and Head of the Church, so tellingly brought by Milligan within the purview of men such as John Macleod, that constrained them to found a Society dedicated to seeking Reunion through reformation on truly Catholic principles. In reaction to modern paganism and naturalism which called in question the factual grounds of Christianity these men were driven to the Catholic Creeds, held alike by the Roman and Reformed Churches, and to their Scriptural basis, that therein they might the better discern and magnify the Incarnational foundation of the Faith. Milligan had done this work; and in the process he had discovered for himself that Faith is grounded not only forensically in a past transaction but also bodily in a present, continuing action. The Being and Action of God had been traced anew to their nexus in the self-oblation of the Incarnate Son, at once in union by the Spirit with the Father and with His Body, the Church. As we have learned, Milligan from the beginning had been impressed by the Baconian, inductive method of natural science. Thence he always sought to build theory on the available evidence. In other words he was seeking to allow the Given of Scripture and theology to determine his textual, critical method, his exegesis, his hermeneutics, and his theology. In short he endeavoured to be scientifically true to the evidence not only in seeking understanding

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1. J.F. Leishman, Linton Leaves, pp. 63, 65.

of the Object of faith but also in the repentant conformity of his theological method to that Object.

We can see how the results of his work were found to be "ready made" for the needs of those who were being driven by agnosticism and scientism to return to the bed-rock of their faith. We can understand how their new awareness of the unity of the Body of Christ made them more sensible to the sin of schism, and more determined to be led by the Spirit in seeking ways whereby that unity might be given a more unavoidable visibility. Herein it is easier to understand why the words and actions of the Scottish Church Society met with such determined opposition from so many of the "true believers". Having long ere this held a faith almost inextricably identified with cultural and national experiences bordering on the traumatic, they came to regard the healthy attempt to broaden the base, to be more scientific, to be truer to the Given, as but the beginning of a traitorous sell-out to an historic enemy, of all that is distinctively national and Presbyterian. Herein, too, one is able to see why a stand for a given reconciliation and union in Christ inevitably provokes the opposition of those who have settled for a less Catholic, a less graceful Christ. But there were those who rallied to the banner of Christ in His fulness.

John Macleod had provided leadership and inspiration, but his continued service to the Church Militant was not to be:

> "Of the Scottish Church Society he was the inspiring genius and a chief part. He had only entered upon what we thought was to be the great work of his life -- the work of Church Reform and Restoration through the courts of the Church and the leadership of the General Assembly -- when it pleased God to call him away.

> ...I remember that when we were drawing up the constitution of the Scottish Church Society he took exceeding care to word the article concerning schism, so as to bring the subject home to ourselves and to give as little offence to others as possible, and it was under his guiding hand that it assumed its present shape. 'Among the special objects to be aimed at' is 'the deepening of a penitential sense of the sin and peril of schism'."[1]

But in addition to Leishman and Sprott there were others of the Society to provide leadership. After "...the death of Professor Milligan, one of the saintliest of men and the greatest theologian of his generation, and of Dr. John Macleod, one of God's greatest gifts to the Church, in any age,..."[2] there were such men as H.J. Wotherspoon and James Cooper to maintain continuity and provide further historical and theological works.

Following Milligan, H.J. Wotherspoon was the theologian of the Scottish Church Society and one of the foremost of the Church. He, too, had discovered the significance of the risen humanity of Christ and consequently the importance of Pentecost.

> "You will find that for the most part (the exceptions so far as I know are Dr. Milligan's treatment in his work on the Ascension, the sermons of Archer Butler, and Hare, Mission of the Comforter, notes) the event of Pentecost is regarded as a gift of the Spirit in 'greater fulness', as an 'outpouring' of influence which had formerly been in operation, but not so vigorously".[3]

Wotherspoon, as did Milligan, saw in John 7:39 the key which

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1. J. Macleod, "The Celebration of the Holy Communion", Scottish Church Society Conferences, First Series, Hitt, Edinburgh, 1894, pp. 113-141; J. Macleod "The Holy Sacrament of Baptism", Scottish Church Society Conferences, Second Series, Vol. I, Hitt, Edinburgh, 1895.
2. Ibid. quoted from Dr. G.W. Sprott, p. 184.
3. H.J. Wotherspoon, What Happened at Pentecost, and other papers, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1937, p. 2.

opens up the prophetic passages concerning the coming of the Spirit and by which understanding is given to John's "vision of their present accomplishment".[1] Wotherspoon simply followed Milligan's lead and in What Happened at Pentecost spelled out the context of the radical newness of the Spirit's gift. Only after the Incarnational development had proceeded through death into resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father did the Spirit proceed through the risen and now perfected humanity of Christ. The human flesh our Lord assumed by Incarnational hypostatic union had to be carried through the cleansing fire of Holiness and inserted forever within the consubtantial union of the Son and the Father before the Spirit of holiness might descend upon sinful flesh without destroying it. But now through the miracle of the sheer grace of forgiveness and the gift of a new, transformed humanity sinful men may share in the eternal, holy fellowship of the love of the Son for the Father and of the Father for the Son in the Spirit.[2]

With this disclosure of the givenness not only of Jesus Christ but also of the Church, His Body, there is given the insight that Church Unity is a present, existing reality in God and not something that awaits the voluntary association of men. Even the called-for response of men is but a grateful follow-up of the continuing response of the God-man to the Father within the Trinitarian fellowship. In this proper context schisms are seen for what they are --

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1. Ibid. p. 14.
2. Ibid. pp. 17-35.

sustained refusals to share with other forgiven sinners in the abounding grace of God under the one Lord, Jesus Christ.[1] Indeed, a refusal to share in this fellowship is a denial of our own sonship.[2]

Wotherspoon's Religious Values in the Sacraments has proved a most able and helpful treatise on the sacramental principle and the sacraments. It is a development of sacramental theology in the light of 'Scottish Church Society' theology and, therefore, an earnest attempt to set forth the sacraments in their organic relation to the continued self-offering of the Lord to the Father and of His Church in Him.[3]

With all the members of the Scottish Church Society there was never any question about the Trinity and the Incarnation. The Church of Scotland has always assumed the truth of these doctrines.

> "...belief in a real Incarnation depends on belief in the eternal and necessary Sonship within the Godhead; and...that belief can stand only as belief that the Son is of a Trinity, in which the Holy Spirit is necessarily and eternally the Bond."[4]

The purpose of Milligan and the others was that of directing attention to the development of the Incarnation brought about by Resurrection and Ascension, to the continuing self-oblation of the Risen, Ascended One, to the union of the Church with her Lord, and to the Sacramental union involved therein.

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1. Ibid. p. 46.
2. Ibid. p. 61.
3. See H.J. Wotherspoon, Religious Values in the Sacraments, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1928.
4. H.J. Wotherspoon, "Trinity", What happened at Pentecost, p. 76.

The doctrinal work of the Society was well within the Catholic Faith; it was simply an attempt to focus the mind of the Church on the living reality of her union with the Lord in His risen, ascended humanity. Of course this call to the Catholic Faith necessarily was a warning against all deviations from the Faith.

> "'Heresy' is teaching divergent from that which the 'Catholic' mind of the Church accepts and holds; and 'Catholic' means, not the 'Universal' but the main, and transmitted from the source, the capable of being universal."[1]

There was the recognition that though it is the purpose of theology to explain where it can and to be as clear as possible, nevertheless it should never expect to plumb the depths of the mystery of the Gospel of God.[2]

The Given is Jesus Christ, clothed in His Gospel. We face Him who is the Gospel. We are led back not to abstractions nor to principles but to events, to evidence, to witness. We are led back to Milligan's starting point.

> "The apostles of Christ were not teachers of abstract truths, they were witnesses to events; they did not live or die for principles (every religion has its martyrs, and martyrdom proves nothing but the sincerity and courage of the sufferer), they lived and died for testimony to what they had seen with their eyes and had looked upon and their hands had handled of the Word of Life, -- testimony which involves mere veracity, and in regard to which martyrdom proves much. Christian teaching of dogma or of conduct prefaces itself with a 'therefore', the premise lying in the faith; the faith itself being in form historical -- the statement of what has happened."[3]

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1. Ibid. p. 74; see also Wotherspoon and Kirkpatrick, A Manual of Church Doctrine, 2nd ed., section on Catholicity, Oxford U. Press, London, 1960, pp. 8-10.
2. Ibid. p. 85.
3. H.J. Wotherspoon, "Creed and Confession", Macleod Memorial Lecture, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1905, p. 10.

We will recall that the first purpose of the Scottish Church Society was that of defending and advancing "Catholic doctrine as set forth in the ancient Creeds and embodied in the Standards of the Church of Scotland". In that purpose may be detected a double aim: to loosen the rigidity of the Church's relation to the Westminster Confession of Faith by leading the Church to view it in the context of the "Catholic doctrine of the ancient Creeds"; and to set forth what the Confession of Faith has in common with the Ancient Creeds in order to hold up the Faith once delivered as the irreducible minimum of the substance of belief. Milligan had urged that if substance of the Faith, as a test, is to be distinguished from the entire Confession -- as he believed should be done -- then that substance should be drawn and formulated. James Cooper was of the same mind.

> "In Scotland, and in our Church of Scotland...the most pressing question is, How shall she use the liberty accorded to her (as a Church Established) to reformulate her relation to the document, the Westminster Confession, which still is to remain the 'public and avowed confession of this Church'; and (what lies behind that, and is of infinitely more importance) how shall the Church, while giving to her ministers a real measure of liberty in regard to 'matters which do not', by her own acknowledgement, 'enter into the substance of the Faith' continue to secure their distinct adhesion to the fundamental verities?"[1]

In the Uniting Act of 1929 the following subscription was adopted by the Church of Scotland:

> "I hereby subscribe the Confession of Faith, declaring it as the Confession of this Church, and that I believe the

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1. J. Cooper, Confessions of Faith and Formulas of Subscription, Maclehose, Glasgow, 1907, p. 3.

> fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith contained therein."[1]

It has been felt that such a subscription is an improvement over the previous conscience-straining identification of the Westminster Confession of Faith with "my faith". However, the subscription still in force falls under Milligan's just criticism:

> "Even the attempt to distinguish between fundamental and non-fundamental articles will be useless, unless the Church in her collective capacity draws and expresses the distinction. The distinction is a sound one. It may be considered as an axiom of Protestant Theology, and its truth is not now denied. But it cannot be left to each individual to draw the line of distinction for himself, or we shall be in the same hopeless confusion as before."[2]

To make a distinction between the Confession of Faith and its substance without drawing and expressing the distinction is indeed to leave it with the subscriber to determine it himself. Thus the earnest attempt to relax the constriction of an identification of personal faith with the acceptance of the whole Confession may become a means whereby, "in good conscience", the individual substitutes his own "self-understanding" for the Faith once delivered.

Surely the subscriber's faith is to be determined by its Given Object and not by his subjective decision. If the Lord precedes the Church, and the Church the individual, if there be an inherent rationality inthe Object of faith, if the Faith be rationally deliverable under the constraining power of the Spirit, then whatever

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1. Practice and Procedure in the Church of Scotland, ed. by J. Cox, 5th edition ed. by J. Longmuir, Edinburgh, 1964, p. 410.
2. W. Milligan, The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord, p. 317.

risk a formulation of Faith's substance might incur, surely it were better that the Church take that risk than that the individual at this juncture be thrown back on himself. Should not the subscription itself be part of the total covenanted way of grace gifted to the members of Christ's Body, to the end that they might the more clearly be assimilated to the mind of Christ through the Apostolic testimony? What is required from the member at this point in his (or her) ecclesiastical career is not formulation but acknowledgement. Formulation there must be, but let the Church formulate. At the same time the Church must heed Pope John's caveat, lest she be tempted to ignore the inherent distinction between the substance of the Faith and its formulation.

Herein we strike yet another area in which the writings of William Milligan are most pertinent today. The Church, having long since made a distinction between the Confession and its substance, will this year (1970) in General Assembly not only consider adopting a proposed formulation of that substance but will also reconsider the place of the Westminster symbols within the context of "the ancient creeds" as well as the Scots Confession.

The proposal is somewhat as follows:

After a solemn declaration, in the name of the ascended Lord Jesus Christ, of the purpose for which the presbytery is met; a statement of the Church's being a part of the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church in the tradition of the Reformation and under the supreme authority of the Bible's witness to the Lord, Himself the Word of God; the acknowledgement of the Apostles' and Nicene Creed

as declarations of the Church's faith; the acknowledged reception and guidance of the Scots and Westminster Confessions; the presbytery then affirms the Church's freedom and responsibility, in dependence on the Spirit, the Scriptures, and in fellowship with the whole Church, to formulate, when needed, Confessions of faith. Then the Church reaffirms "these fundamental doctrines of the faith":

> "We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe in the Gospel of the sovereign grace and love of God, wherein through Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, incarnate, crucified, risen and glorified, we are reconciled to God and to one another, and summoned to receive, in repentance and faith, the forgiveness of sins, renewal by the Holy Spirit, and eternal life.
>
> We believe that Jesus Christ, the one Prophet, Priest and King within His Church, calls us to share with Him in His continuing ministry in the world whereby through the Holy Spirit, He builds up His Church by Word and Sacrament, ministers to the need of all men, and calls them into His eternal Kingdom.
>
> We believe that we are summoned to intercede for all men, and to look with joy for the coming in glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of history, who will judge all men in righteousness and love and bring to fulfilment His eternal purposes for all creatures."[1]

The ordinand is then asked if he believes "these fundamental doctrines of the faith".

Should the Church of Scotland adopt the proposals of the Panel on Doctrine, it need not be argued that such a development would be in quite close accord with the entire intent of William Milligan's theology, as well as with the purposes of the founders of the Scottish Church Society. Jesus Christ is acknowledged as the Lord of the Church. Scripture is viewed as the supremely authoritative witness to the Lord. The ancient Creeds are officially acknowledged.

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1. Excerpted from Panel on Doctrine, Revised Preamble, Questions and Formula.

The Westminster Confession, no longer regarded as the subordinate standard, takes its place in line with the Scots Confession. Honour is done to the Reformation Faith, along with but not in isolation from the Church Catholic and the witness of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. The way is open for the doing of theology without the necessity of having to differ so radically with a standard that has been viewed for long as but slightly subordinate to Holy Scripture. The Catholicity of the Church is given a more official acknowledgement, thereby serving the cause of Church Reunion.

Surely the time has come when Churches, whether established or not, must give a much more visible witness to their unity in the body of Christ. Though Catholicity is no more a true mark of the Church today than it was yesterday, the need of its visibility is so much more obvious today than ever before. The Church must rise above the level of the nation-state and stand in the reconciling gap, where her Lord is.[1]

The proposals of the Panel on Doctrine are governed throughout by a strong Christology. The recital of the fundamental doctrines of the Church, clustered around the risen, ascended Lord, leaves the members in no doubt as to the substance of the Faith. As our Lord is high and lifted up, all other standards are viewed in proper perspective.

Especially noteworthy is the high eschatology of the preamble of faith, with its witness to the coming in glory of the Judge of all. Needless to say, Milligan would have rejoiced in this witness

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1. J.R, Oppenheimer, The Flying Trapese: Three Crises for Physicists, Oxford University Press, London, 1964, pp. 61, 65.

to the transforming consummation and judgment of all things in the final parousia of Jesus Christ. He would have acknowledged a distinction between now and then, the healthy tension between the present and the yet to be. But he also, in the light of Him who is the Beginning and the End, would have stressed that, as we enter by the Spirit into the New Testament witness, the distinction between the first and second Comings is less noticeable.

> "...The word Parousia, so often used in this connection, cannot mean 'future coming'. It can mean only 'presence', although that particular presence may have associated with it the thought of a degree of glory only to be manifested at a future day...That, accordingly, for which the first Christians looked was not so much Christ's coming as the 'manifestation' of His coming. This, however, was not strictly speaking a Second Advent. It was simply the completion of the First Advent. It was not a 'day of the Lord' wholly new. It was only a filling out of the idea of that day in all its completeness."[1]

But the operative word in the proposed preamble is "risen". The revelation of the incarnate Lord as risen was, is, and will continue to be the central empiric fact of the Faith. It stands against all types of gnostic attempts to resolve it into a subjective construct. Together with the empty tomb, it constitutes the essential this-worldly level of objectivity. It is more than that, but it is that. Afterwards:

> "Jesus himself stood among them. But they were startled and frightened, and supposed that they saw a spirit. And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do questionings rise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a Spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have'."[2]

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1. W. Milligan, Elijah, pp. 212, 213.
2. Luke 24:36-40.

> "On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you'. When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord."[1]

The writer wishes to record his gratitude to the Lord Jesus Christ that through the works of His disciple, William Milligan (and of others in the same tradition), he has been led to a better, fuller appreciation of the centrality and significance of His Resurrection, Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood.

ὄντως ἠγέρθη ὁ κύριος.

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1. John 20:19, 20.

EPILOGUE

In her In Memoriam, composed especially for the eleven children, William Milligan's widow wrote:

> "The thought of retirement from his professional work had for some time been pressing on your father's mind. For several years he had been suffering from weakness of eyesight which made his work very trying and laborious. In his own words, he felt that it was preventing him 'keeping pace with the progress of an ever-extending field of study, in which new investigations are every day made, new fields explored and new results obtained. With these investigations, explorations and results the students of this class ought to be made acquainted. They are difficult in their nature, momentous in their effects. Superficial enquiry and hasty conclusions cannot in some circumstances be tolerated. Students are entitled to more, and a professor who has his work at heart is bound to render more. That "more" the deficiency (in eyesight), to which I have referred, puts it beyond my power to give, and the step which I propose to take becomes necessary from my regard for the good of the University, and without thinking of the manner in which I may be affected by it.'"[1]

William Milligan sent in his resignation in July, 1893. He became ill soon after retirement. In October he undertook the journey to Edinburgh, where he had planned to live out his days in further study and writing. But that was not to be. In the evening of December 11th, 1893, surrounded by his wife and children he peacefully 'entered into rest'.

The following Sunday William Milligan was remembered from quite a few pulpits; and, needless to say, his widow received many letters. There follow some pertinent excerpts:

From the Rev. John Macleod, D.D.:

> "I believe that he was used to enrich permanently, by the realisation of deeper aspects of the great salvation, the

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1. A. Milligan, In Memoriam, William Milligan, D.D. The University Press, Aberdeen, 1894, pp. 47, 48.

spiritual life of the whole Church of God. This is to say much, but not too much. I refer particularly to the help he furnished to our apprehension of what our salvation is... as being in union with the Life immortal and that has passed through death. In this direction lay, I feel deeply, his greatest work.

...I believe that the lines of preparation in many fields are converging more and more clearly and rapidly to the Resurrection."[1]

From the Rev. J. Marshall Lang, D.D.:

"I feel that one of the best men, the dearest friends, the most beautiful soul I ever knew has been taken from this world: and to me and to very many it is now a world greatly poorer. No man I loved and honoured more than him. He influenced me mentally and spiritually more than I can express; and the gentleness of his nature, the elevation of all the levels of his thought and action shed an unspeakable charm over all intercourse with him -- either by book or face to face."[2]

From the Right Rev. B.F. Westcott, D.D.:

"To my very great sorrow I see that another of my most valued friends has passed to rest in the midst of work which was felt by all to be full of blessing. Since it was my privilege to make the acquaintance of Dr. Milligan at the meetings for the revision of the New Testament, more than twenty years ago, I have learnt to value more and more highly his fresh and vigorous thought and deep insight into the Truth. Our special lines of study were singularly alike, and this first enabled me to feel even more than others the permanent importance of Dr. Milligan's labours."[3]

From the Bishop of Aberdeen:

"He was a pioneer in God's work of leading true believers to be all of one mind -- and right well did he do the work that God had sent him into the world to do for Him. And his works do follow him -- and his toil is over; but the fruit of his

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1. In Memoriam, a collection of letters received in December 1893 and of portions of sermons preached on December 17th, 1893, by kind permission of Miss Joan Hill Stewart, pp. 1, 2.
2. Ibid. p. 4.
3. Ibid. pp. 5, 6.

life and labours and prayers will abound more and more, ever leading men to a higher faith, and so to a closer unity with each other, because nearer to 'the mind which was in Christ Jesus'."[1]

From the Rev. Principal Fairbairn, Mansfield College, Oxford:

"To know Dr. Milligan was to love him. He stands out in my memory as one of the purest, most highsouled and upright men I have ever known. He always bore himself with a native dignity that was subdued and made beautiful by indwelling grace. He did and could do nothing mean, for his spirit was chivalrous, and evil or unworthiness in any form caused him ever acutest pain. He loved high things, and he lived and thought and spoke as he loved. He loved the Church, watched over her with a godly jealousy, ever fearful lest she should soil those beautiful garments which became her as the bride of Christ. And he loved good men everywhere; how his affections, in which were ever blended the fatherly and the brotherly, went beyond his own communion, no one had more occasion to know and appreciate than I. He often seemed to me as the Archbishop Leighton of our days, wishful, while other men contended for the secular or the civil, only to be left free to minister in things spiritual and eternal.

Well do I remember our last walk, just a year ago! We walked over the links and along the sands within sound of the sea, and something of its music and immensity was in his spirit and his speech. We talked of our respective churches, of the grave problems within them and without, -- of our special difficulties in England, and yours in Scotland; and then like one who shakes off a burden, he turned from the perplexing present to the calm eternity, -- spoke of the Head as a parable of the history of His Church as well as its Life, crucified, dead, risen, reigning.

His hopes were with the High Priest who reigned in Heaven and the Holy Spirit who abode with His Church and governed its destinies in spite of all the feebleness of men.

We parted, he to the Old Town, I to the New; but with a chastened feeling as if I had walked with a man whose habitual walk was with God. And that feeling Dr. Milligan gave in a degree no other man I have known has ever given."[2]

From Professor George Adam Smith:

"...what all we younger men felt as good to ourselves was his example as a Christian thinker and teacher. There is no man living in Scotland who worked along lines more lofty or pure.

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1. Ibid. p. 7.

2. Ibid. pp. 7-9.

> To have known him and his work will be an inspiration to the end of our lives. I regret now that I heard or saw him so little. But we have his books; and his teaching about our Risen Saviour, which he was kind enough to explain to me one day with his own lips, will always exert a practical influence on my life."[1]

From the Rev. James Brebner:

> "I would like to say that there are many, who will not write to you, and who yet feel as I do, that whatever has been best in our ministry we owe to him who is gone. His influence was great beyond his own Church -- greater far than that of any other in it -- but I think his greatest of all was that in the lives of those whom he taught to love him so well, because he taught them to love and serve his Master."[2]

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1. Ibid. p. 12.
2. Ibid. p. 15.

BIOGRAPHY

15 March, 1821	Born, eldest of seven children
1829-32 (approx.)	Attended the High School of Edinburgh
1832	Moved to Elie in Fife
1832-35	Attended the parish school of Kilconquhar
1835-39	United College, University of St. Andrews, M.A.
1839-41	St. Mary's College, University of St. Andrews.
1841-43	University of Edinburgh. B.D., Licensed Assistant of Rev. Robt. Swan, Abercrombie
1844	Appointed to the parish of Cameron, Fife
1845-46	Year's leave of absence in Germany
1850	Appointed to the parish of Kilconquhar
September 1858	Engaged to Anne Mary Moir
15 October 1858	Milligan's father died
15 February 1859	Marriage
2 April 1860	George born
1860	Chair of Biblical Criticism, Aberdeen
2 June 1861	David born
Spring, 1862 (2 months)	Had charge of the Scottish Church in Paris
Summer, 1862 (1 month)	Heidelberg
1862	Awarded D.D. by University of St. Andrews
12 December 1862	Katherine born
24 August 1864	William born

Summer 1865	Germany, began the study of Syriac under Professor Roediger; became interested in symbolism in talks with Professor Ferdinand Piper at Berlin.
18 April 1866	Janet born
1868	Failed to obtain appointment to Chair of Biblical Criticism, University of Edinburgh
1 July 1868	Anne Mary born
1869	Visited the Holy Land with the Rev. Andrew Thomson of Edinburgh
22 June 1870	First meeting of the New Testament Revision Company
14 August 1870	Frederick born
30 December 1871	Wyndham born
1872	With the Rev. J. Marshall Lang, represented the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.
1873	Milligan's mother died
18 July 1873	Emily born
1875	Appointed Depute Clerk, General Assembly
25 December 1875	Agnes born
10 February 1879	Oswald born
1879	Spent two months in Geneva
1879	Elected member of the Aberdeen School Board
1879-80	Delivered Croall Lectures on the Resurrection of Our Lord
11 November 1880	Last meeting of the Revision Co.
1882	Elected Moderator of General Assembly
1882	Elected Chairman of Aberdeen School Board

1885	Because of Liberal principles failed as candidate for the office of Principal of the University of Aberdeen
1886	Nominated by the Senators as one of their representatives to the University Court
1886	Promoted by Church to the chief clerkship of the Assembly
1886	Baird Lectures on The Revelation of St. John
1888	To Germany to examine what was being done there in Technical Education and Continuation Schools
1889	Nominated by the Senatus as one of its representatives on the Educational Trust
1889	To Gothenburg, Sweden, to examine the licensing system
1891	Baird Lectures on The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of Our Lord
1892	Elected President of the Scottish Church Society
July 1893	Resigned from Chair of Biblical Criticism
Mid October 1893	Moved to Edinburgh
11 December 1893	Died.

APPENDIX

Note I

Intuition

The restricted use of the word 'intuitive' as applied to the mode in which the principle of causality is known through introspection is a clear indication of how far the natural theology Milligan was taught and its ally, the Philosophy of Common Sense, had strayed from the genuine scientific method both claimed to practice.

The basic meaning of intuition is direct knowledge of an actually existent object apprehended as it is in itself. This is intuition in the empirical realm. But intuition functions in the intelligible sphere also; here it is the capacity to apprehend truth directly, without any intermediate discursive ratiocination. For example, the basic axioms of mathematics may be understood intuitively without any preliminary logical proof. Common Sense philosophy held that these principles, or First Truths, of mathematics and logic are known intuitively and that mathematical and logical deduction are based on them. In this the Common Sense philosophers followed a major line of thought on logic and mathematics.

Intuition also plays a role in Spinoza's philosophy, designating the kind of knowledge that grasps the essence of things. Bergson's intuitionism is not to be identified with instinct or an original or immediate apprehension but with a penetration into the spontaneous whole which is the basis and conclusion of intellectual work.

This is an intuition of totality, a synthetic intuition.

The natural theology and Common Sense philosophy taught at St. Andrews banned intuition from application to God and the world, while allowing it to operate solely in the sphere of consciousness, where by intuition the mind allegedly discovers its own constitutive, God-given principles. Though representative perception was disallowed, presentative perception was viewed as including a prior judgment. Sensation was described as being an abstraction from the basic natural judgment. In this context God is known only inferentially, as Creator, His creation remaining opaque to any present, intuitive knowledge of Him.

In Germany Milligan would have become acquainted with different kinds of intuition, different forms of direct knowing. There the intuitionism of the Romantic tradition was a degenerated form of the classic intuitionism that operates within the intelligible realm. From the Romantic tradition, theologically articulated by Schleiermacher, Milligan would have been taught that God is known directly, intuitively through feeling, through a conscious awareness of absolute dependence upon a Power. This Power is not conceptually knowable; no rational structure is to be discerned in this Power. All objectifications of God imply mediation, but God can be known only immediately, intuitively, by spirit in the potentiated self-consciousness. Only Jesus attained to a pure God-consciousness, a pure intuition of God, through a perfectly energized self-consciousness. It is true, then, that in a sense through the church, by historical cause and effect, Christ mediates to us a

consciousness of sin and of redemption -- but to the end that we might have an intuitive awareness of God. Mediation is located in the historical correlation between the energetic perfect God-consciousness of Jesus and our yet-to-be energized but nonetheless structurally identical self-consciousness. Christ's mediation is in order to the potentiating of our own unmediated, intuitive awareness of God. In other words, it is a mediation the purpose of which is attained when intuition of God, sans mediator, is reached.

Kantian thought undoubtedly played a formative role in the development of the position of Schleiermacher. Both men accepted the fruits of natural science, the causality supposed to underlie the uniformity of nature, and its closed system. Seeking to find a place for God, immortality, and freedom, Kant was driven to posit this knowledge on the basis of the practical, or moral, reason. God was to be known mediately by means of the categorical imperative, the moral sense of right.

Kant admitted the existence of things in themselves behind all phenomena, but, because of the very structure of the mind, nothing could be known about those things. Only appearances can be known; the rational structures of the phenomena are contributed by the synthetic <u>a priori</u> categories of the mind. Not only that, space and time are simply the <u>a priori</u> forms of sensibility that man brings with him; they serve as the sensible given of all experience -- space and time for all outer experience, time for all inner experience -- within which such intuitively known continua man's understanding provides structural concepts. Within this understanding of

intuition there can be no real contact with the transcendent Reality, only with transcendental reality -- i.e., a relative reality that is given by the subject. Consequently, God cannot be conceived as disclosing Himself intuitively through the earthly, God-created media. Schleiermacher, with all his emphasis on the historical mediator, was in agreement with this, having been equally impressed by the supposedly closed world system of natural science. Schleiermacher did not accept Kant's mediate way to God. Rather it would appear that his theory of the intuitive apprehension of God was closely allied to Kant's aesthetic intuitionism.

In contradistinction to Kant and Schleiermacher, true, rational, intuitive knowledge of God is mediated to us by disclosure through the created reality of the space-time world, within the context of the history of Israel, centring in the Incarnate Word.[1]

Thus theology had wandered far from the doctrines of Calvin, who had taught that God is revealed intuitively through the Word by the testimony of the Spirit. It has been shown that Calvin was brought to this position through the teaching of Duns Scotus as interpreted by John Major.[2] Scotus held that the intellect apprehends all being -- including the being of God -- directly, intuitively, according to its specific, actual nature. However, according to Scotus, man's sin has refracted this knowledge, making him rely in good part on the clarifying and systematising forms of discursive

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1. See H.P. Owen, The Christian Knowledge of God, Athlone Press, London, 1969, pp. 123-139.

2. See T.F. Torrance, "Intuitive and Abstractive Knowledge of God", an unpublished essay.

thought. Scotus distinguished between natural objects of knowledge and voluntary objects, each to be known according to its specific nature. For Scotus the will both of God and of man plays an important role in the act of knowing. God's will determines the kind of intuitive knowledge man has of Him. His will to make Himself known, though man's will must also be reckoned with, accounts for the impelling, compulsive character of revelation. All levels of knowledge, including natural and voluntary, must be judged by the highest level, that of God's own self-knowledge within the distinctions of the Trinity. Calvin accepted Scotus' basic doctrine of the knowledge of God with some variations and additions. He acknowledged the important role played by the will, but in his epistemology it was the intellect that retained its primary importance. By John Major, Calvin was made more appreciative of the "auditive" character of knowledge in our learning from God in and through the spoken word. This was in agreement with Anselm's underscoring of the necessary distinction within the Trinity between God's speaking and God's understanding. Major's re-emphasis on the spokenness of the Word, which required hearing, over against Scotus' primary allegiance to the showing and seeing aspect of knowledge, was what gave an additional dimension to Calvin's concept of intuitive knowledge. Add to that Calvin's recognition of the central importance of the Spirit's personal working in and through the Word, and we have one of the chief contributions Calvin made to hermeneutics and theological method. As a result this doctrine of the knowledge of God avoids the Augustinian idea of intellectual enlightenment on

one side and the Aristolelian abstractionism on the other. God is known directly and personally in His willing accommodation, through the Incarnate Word and in the Spirit, to man's intellect in an intuitive compelling acquaintance. Here we come into the apostle Paul's meaning when he speaks of knowing God, or rather of being known by Him. Our knowledge of God is taken up by the grace of the humanity of His Son into His own inner Trinitarian Self-knowledge. And all our knowing must be judged and controlled by this archetypal knowing and being known. All is grace, even our knowing. It is just this movement within knowing that directs us away from and out of ourselves into an intuitive apprehension of objects in the world, according to the inner rationality of those objects; and it is the revelatory power of the Supreme Object of knowledge that through effecting the transparency of the adapted media enables man to know Him intuitively and rationally in his being known. To attempt to look within oneself for this knowledge is to move in the wrong direction.

The right direction for our attention is always outward, outward to the actual, existent, specific, this-worldly evidence or testimony and <u>through</u> that evidence, by the disclosing power of the Holy Spirit, <u>to</u> the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father. Richard Whately's words here are most pertinent:

> "The <u>general tenor</u> of all the narrative, and all the teaching, of the New Testament, <u>presupposes</u> evidence as the original ground on which belief had been all along demanded: the unbelief which it denounced as sin, being, not the <u>requiring</u> of evidence, but -- on the <u>contrary</u> -- the <u>rejection</u> of evidence."[1]

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1. R. Whately, <u>Elements of Logic</u>, tenth edition revised, E. Lumley, London, 1898, p. 437.

We can and do have intuitive knowledge of created reality; and through the medium of created reality, focused on the Incarnate Word, by means of the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit, we can and do have an intuitive knowledge of the Triune God.

The whole movement of the development of the theology of William Milligan is <u>to</u> the testimony of the Biblical documents, <u>through</u> the documents <u>to</u> the unique, new, risen, bodily existence of our Lord, and, <u>in</u> and <u>with</u> him, <u>towards</u> the Father -- all this by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the risen humanity of Christ, and all by grace to the glory of God.

Note II

Another Essay

In addition to William Milligan's two theological essays written while a student at St. Andrews, there is another one held in the University Library, possibly because it, too, won a prize for its author. The title is Essay on the laws of the Twelve Tables, "Tabulae peccare vetantes."[1] On this essay the following notation is inscribed: "(?Rector's Prize Essay, University of St. Andrews, 1842-43)".[2]

This date is unlikely, for Milligan during the sessions 1841-42, 42-43, was in attendance at the University of Edinburgh.

The bulk of the 161 page essay consists of a detailed presentation and analysis of the Laws of the Twelve Tables, the early Roman code. For our purpose we need only glance at what Milligan believed to be the basis of the Roman law:

> "We only recognise in the Roman law a closer adherence to the great principles which nature herself inculcates."
>
> "We have seen the great principles of nature reduced to practice in the land and institutions of the Romans."[3]

It is important for us to note that already in this early essay there is manifested a primary characteristic of all of Milligan's writings, the view that all thought and institutions are reducible to great principles. In order to understand any subject one must seek

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1. University of St. Andrews Library, M.S.L.F. 1119. A2R2.
2. Ibid. title page.
3. W. Milligan, Essay on the Laws of the Twelve Tables, "Tabulae peccare vetantes", University of St. Andrews Library, M.S.L.F. 1119. A2R2, pp. 11, 161.

and find its underlying and governing principles. In this essay the Roman law is seen as only one manifestation of the law of God. Milligan's thought here has been influenced by his reading of the Ecclesiastical Polity of Thomas Hooker, whom he quotes.

> "Stamped upon the heart of man by the hand of the omnipotent it [the law] exercises a beneficial control over his actions wherever he emerges from the forest and the cave. As the law of nature it points out the moral relation in which he stands to those connected with him, it leads him to revere and to submit to some being of a higher order than himself, deriving much of its force from the circumstance that through the dark vista of futurity he seems to perceive some place where after his mortal course is run, he shall receive the reward or the punishments of his actions. As the law of Nations...as the civil law..."[1]

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1. Ibid. pp. 1, 2.

Note III

Francis Bacon and Induction

It has been stated that the "Common Sense" use of induction, turned in upon the mind, was illegitimate and counter to the intention of Francis Bacon. Let us consider this point, and we will see how Bacon's method itself was twisted from its intended use and proper sphere by those who had been impressed by its accomplishments. According to his own statements in his confession of faith, Lord Verulam held to the orthodox definition of the person of Jesus Christ, the Word become flesh:

> "That in the fulness of time, according to the promise and oath, of a chosen lineage descended the blessed seed of the woman, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God and Saviour of the world; who was conceived by the power and overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, and took flesh of the Virgin Mary: that the Word did not only take flesh, or was joined to flesh, but was made flesh, though without confusion of substance or nature: so as the eternal Son of God and the ever blessed Son of Mary was one person; so one, as the blessed Virgin may be truly and catholicly called Deipara, the Mother of God; so one, as there is no unity in universal nature, not that of the soul and body of man, so perfect; for the three heavenly unities, whereof that is the second, exceed all natural unities: that is to say, the unity of the three persons in the Godhead; the unity of God and man in Christ; and the unity of Christ and the Church: the Holy Ghost being the worker of both these latter unities; for by the Holy Ghost was Christ incarnate and quickened in the flesh, and by the Holy Ghost is man regenerate and quickened in spirit."[1]

It is difficult to see how Bacon could have been more definite than that. Three other quotations will indicate his view of the nature of the creation, the realm in which the inductive method is to operate:

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1. Francisci de Verulamio, Novum Organum, edited, with notes, by J.S. Brewer, Kings College, London, 1856, pp. lviii,lix.

> "that one person of the Godhead should be united to one nature, and to one particular [my emphasis] of his creatures: that so, in the person of the Mediator, the true ladder might be fixed, whereby God might descend to his creatures, and his creatures might ascend to God...: all with respect to the Mediator; which is the great mystery and perfect centre of all God's ways with his creatures, and unto which all his other works and wonders do but serve and refer."[1]
>
> "...that whensoever God doth transcend the law of nature by miracles, which may ever seem as new creations, he never cometh to that point or pass, but in regard to the work of redemption, which is the greater, and whereto all God's signs and miracles do refer."[2]
>
> "That Jesus, the Lord, became...a lord of nature in his miracles; a conqueror of death and the power of darkness in his resurrection..., accomplished the whole work of redemption and restitution of man to a state superior to the angels, whereas the state of man by creation was inferior, and reconciled and established all things according to the eternal will of the Father."[3]

What it is necessary to see here in regard to Bacon's view of nature is this: when we investigate nature through its proper interpretation by means of genuine induction and its methods of exclusion we are tracking not mere phenomena but that in which (in materia) inhere -- and are there to be discovered -- the true forms of creation, which are now, because of the incarnation (and resurrection, ascension, and descent of the Spirit), true signs of the end, the redemption that is in Jesus. There is something deep and subtle in nature, there for the discovering. Nature is not mere phenomena; inhering in it is not an impossible-to-discover something, but that which God has already revealed in Jesus Christ. This does not mean that we need only to look at nature in order to see God;

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1. Francisci de Verulamio, Novum Organum, pp. liv, lv.
2. Ibid. p. lvii.
3. Ibid. p. lix.

that would be a confusion, and nature would replace God. Just the opposite is required: a laborious, sweat-of-the-brow, investigation and interpretation. In this way the idola of man's mind are driven out and there takes place a renewing of the mind in its commerce with the real forms of nature. Herein knowledge and power are synonymous.

According to Bacon, there has taken place a real union between nature (i.e. creation) and God; it is a union in a "particular", in Jesus, the Word made flesh. Thus there can be no absolute contingency but only a contingency relative to the ratio of the incarnational act in Jesus Christ. But just as there is no separation there is no confusion. Thus science cannot find the clue to the labyrinth of nature by mere contemplation, which might have been legitimate before the Fall; but science must seek by induction the true forms in nature, which forms, when discovered, serve as signs, pointing to the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. These forms are not Platonic, for they can never be abstracted from nature and seen in their "essence" apart from nature. They are known in materia and then only as analogues of, or pointers to, the reality of the hypostatic union. Herein then we have the true motivation of science, which is only secondarily that man should regain his lordship over nature, with all its humanitarian and utilitarian aspects, but rather that God might thereby be glorified and the truth seen as it now is in the Lord Jesus.

Nor can we absolutely separate the science of nature from the science of theology, for what God has joined together no man is to

put asunder. It is only through the incarnation, the Word made flesh in a particular creature, that man is palpably directed to seek in the particulars of nature the signs of God's creation and man's redemption and thereby claim his intended dominion over creation under the Lordship of God in Jesus, who even now is "lord of nature".

Herein, and once again, we have the ground and justification of induction -- in Jesus Christ. The particular has been assumed into the Logos, while remaining a particular; thereby it is revealed that all particulars, all contingents, all events temporal and historical have been given a grounding through Jesus in the Logos. Therefore there is no need to try to find the justification of induction in man's mind or anywhere else. All justification is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now for the "Common Sense" philosophers to take this inductive method, so fruitful in the hands of the natural scientists, and to believe that it could be applied legitimately to the "phenomena" of the mind in order to find there, introspectively, the true laws of the mental constitution, to do this was a breach of both the word and spirit of the Baconian programme. Not that Bacon ruled out introspection, but that thereby one cannot find anything on which to rest the induction. Man's mind, perverted by the fall, is full of <u>idola</u>, and it is man's tendency to leap from a most inadequate induction to the highest generalisations and then deduce from them the middle axioms. Thus the <u>scientia</u> of the mind is not a true reflection of the creation, as it should be in the proper interpretation

of nature. Any so-called principles, therefore, that the philosophers might claim to discover in their minds are distortions and certainly not constitutive laws upon which the investigation of nature can proceed.

Moreover, according to Bacon, the nature of man's mind or soul or spirit (which words he appears to use interchangeably)

> "in the creation was not extracted out of the mass of heaven and earth by the benediction of a producat but was immediately inspired from God: so it is not possible that it should be (otherwise than by accident) subject to the laws of heaven and earth, which are the subject of philosophy; and therefore the true knowledge of the nature and state of the soul must come by the same inspiration that gave the substance."[1]

We see then that if there is going to be any demonstration of the truth of Revelation the Baconian spirit cannot be conjured to bless its being based on the so-called intuitive principle of the mind.

Obviously the inductive method has been used and will be used with great success by non-Christians, but only Christians can have a genuine knowledge of its source and end, which must ever evade those who would receive the gift without the Giver. Yet, whether or not the true source and end of natural science are acknowledged, is not God using science to bring the world, willy-nilly, through the geometrically progressive development of more and more media (especially the electric media), to acknowledge its organic unity and ultimately to accept or reject the One in whom God is summing up all things? And is not this the genuine Baconian programme?

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1. F. Bacon, Essays, Civil and Moral, The Advancement of Learning, Ward, Lock & Co., London, p. 118.

Note IV

Evidential Apologetics at the High School, Edinburgh

It is interesting to note that the evidential apologetics was being presented and taught to the scholars at the High School of Edinburgh, where William Milligan attended for three or four years until 1832, when his father became minister of the parish of Elie in Fife. That year William was awarded the Macdonald medal for being dux of his class in Latin.

> "Nor is his Bible neglected. He is delighted to have explained to him those usages, physical features and other peculiarities of the East and of Eastern life, which enable him intelligently to peruse the word of Life. And guided by His Master, he follows Porteus's Evidences of the Truth of Christianity, the allusions being explained, the arguments expanded, cleared up, and illustrated, thus learning, as we all should, 'to give a reason for the hope that is in him'."[1]

The quotation above is from an article by a master of the High School, written in 1848 as part of a description of what the pupil would experience in the curriculum and life of the school; there is no weighty reason to believe that it was not the same when William Milligan attended.

When we turn to Porteus's Evidences we find:

> "Proposition I - From considering the state of the heathen world, before the appearance of our Lord upon earth, it is evident that there was an absolute necessity for a divine revelation of God's will, and, of course, a great probability beforehand that such a revelation would be granted...
> Proposition XII - The resurrection of our Lord from the dead, is a fact fully proved by the clearest evidence, and it is the seal and confirmation of his divinity, and of the truth of his religion.
> ...it is an event so singular in its nature, and so infinitely important in its consequences, that it well deserves

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1. W. Steven, The History of the High School of Edinburgh, MacLachlan & Stewart, Edinburgh, 1849.

> to be made the subject of a distinct proposition. ...and they themselves constantly referred to the resurrection more than to any other evidence as the great foundation on which their faith was built."[1]

If William Milligan studied this book as a boy -- and it is likely that he did as a scholar at the High School of Edinburgh -- we have evidence of his early exposure to the subject of Christian evidences and to the central position of the resurrection.

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1. B. Porteus, A Summary of the Principal Evidence for the Truth and Divine Origin of the Christian Revelation, designed chiefly for the use of young persons, 8th edition, T. Cadell and W. Davies, London, 1803.

Note V

Chalmers and the Newtonian Triumph

How similar does Chalmers' messenger, in the context of the evidential proof, appear to the prophet of the Newtonian (Arian) heresy. Here we may detect the probable influence of Newton's apparently triumphant universal law of gravitation and its having been misread as absolute evidence for a rigid determinism in nature, reflecting a determinism in God Himself.

Chalmers, in spite of his greatness, was still a child of his age. He admired Bacon and sought to cultivate the habit of induction; but he viewed the inductive method as something detached from the incarnation. For him Bacon had simply spelled out what every man should really know anyway:

> "...without once having looked on the Novum Organum of Bacon, there is not a human creature in the maturity of his ordinary understanding, who does not know his great and simple lesson, and only great because of the monstrous absurdities by which for ages it was wholly overborne -- even that to ascertain the visible qualities of an object we must look, or its sonorous qualities we must listen, or its tangible qualities we must handle or its dimensions we must measure."[1]

And even Chalmers' outward look to objects in the world of nature is a look unto objects, it would seem, within the Newtonian framework of space:

> "He [Newton] did not first medicate his understanding by the prescriptions of logic, and then go forth with it on the theatre of its exercise. But he went forth with it in all the vigour of its immediate and original health, and fastened it at once on the objects of physical investigation. Even

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1. T. Chalmers, Evidences of the Christian Revelation, Thos. Constable, Edinburgh, 1855, p. 14.

> the three laws of Nature, by which he introduces the Principia to his reader, he gathered, not from the field of his internal, but from that of his external contemplations. They are not laws of mind, but laws which have their jurisdiction in surrounding space; and it is by looking there and not by looking to itself, that the mind is enabled to recognise them."[1]

Chalmers believed that Newton had discovered an unbreakable law of nature, a truly universal necessity, which though arrived at inductively, could now claim a new status. It was no longer a mere generalisation which might in future have to be altered to account for a new fact; rather, it was absolute, and therefore revelatory of God's unchangeable law:

> "...the confirmation which it [Newton's Law of Universal Gravitation] met was nearly universal and indeed entirely so within the limits of accessible nature, with the exception of one solitary but rebellious phenomenon which defied for a century all the efforts of mathematicians to reduce it to a harmony with that great principle which subordinated to itself all the other planetary movements. Meanwhile the law beauteous and magnificent, if only universal, had the burden of an exception laid upon it. The love of systems, and the love of generality, were kept, pro tanto, in abeyance. It was in the very essence of Lord Bacon's philosophy so to defer to the prerogatives of observation, that so long as it furnished even but one refractory appearance, this was held in arrest of a judgment that would have else been absolute and co-extensive with all truth. It required humility, as well as the hardihood of a thorough experimentalist to resist the fascination; but nobly at length it was rewarded. After the suspense of two or three generations, the Newtonian system was at length evolved out of this last and only difficulty which adhered to it. By the calculations of Laplace, the exception from the law has been demonstrated to be an exemplification of the law. Till this reconciliation was effected, philosophers, true to the inductive spirit, submitted to all the mental uneasiness of this abatement or obscuration of a great principle, and refused to the sublimest generality of nature the place which it has now attained of an absolute and universal category."[2]

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1. Ibid. pp. 8, 9.
2. T. Chalmers, Institute of Theology, Sutherland & Knox, Edinburgh, 1849, Vol. I, pp. 350, 351.

> "How came it that, by the toilsome path of observation, this submissive scholar arrived at a system more beauteous, and noble, and greatly more regaling both to the intellect and imagination of man than did any of his predecessors, who devised and excogitated at pleasure? The reply is obvious. Their system is but the archetype of the conceptions of men, his the archetype of the conceptions of God."[1]

One can see how Chalmers, believing this to be true, would have been open to the deterministic theology of Jonathan Edwards, with its necessitarian system based on the axiom of the absolute and immutable justice of God and undergirding the Calvinistic rationale of the divine decrees of double predestination; though, be it admitted, Chalmers was uneasy whenever he tried to hold these decrees before the face of Jesus Christ.

Had Chalmers accepted and built upon Bacon's Christological presuppositions he would not have identified Newton's law of Universal Gravitation with "the archetype of the conceptions of God" but would have looked upon it as a scientifically feasible generalisation on the basis of the available evidence, and not without analogical possibilities. Having begun with the Cartesian mind-body dualism, Chalmers sought and thought he had found the unitary resolution of that dualism -- not, as DesCartes had found it, in the pineal gland, but, -- in a divine determinism of law, inclusive of the incarnational union.

It is the writer's opinion that William Milligan, like almost every theologian of the nineteenth century, was not uninfluenced by the Newtonian "triumph".

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1. Ibid. pp. 353, 354.

Note VI

The Faculty of Theology, Halle, 1845.

There follows a list of those teaching in the faculty of the University of Halle in 1845; this was made available through the kindness of the secretary of the Dean of the Theological Faculty of Halle-Wittenberg, Martin Luther University.

A. Ord. Professoren

B. Ad. Marks	1815-1847:	Homiletik
J.A. Wegscheider	1810-1849:	Dogmatik/Religionsphilosophie
J.K. Thilo	1819-1853:	Kirchengeschichte/AT-Exegese
Chr.Fr. Fritzsche	1827-1850:	Kirchengeschichte/Dogmatik/ Exegese/Katechetik/Didaktic/ bibl. Theologie.
A. Tholuck	1825-1877:	Dogmatik/Encyklopädie und Methodologie der theol. Wissenschaften/NT Exegese. Universitätsprediger.
H.E.F. Guerkicke	1829-1835; 1840-1877:	Kirchengeschichte.
Julius Müller	1839-1878:	Dogmatik
H. Hüpfeld	1843-1866:	A.T.-Exegese.

B. as. Professoren

K.Chr.L. Franke	1833-1879	
A.F. Dähne	1835-1879	
H.A. Niemeyer	1829-1851:	Historische und exegetische Theologie/neutestamente-Apologetik/ christliche Altertümer.

C. Privatdozent

Karl Schwarz	1842-1845	
(als Professor)	1849-1856:	Dogmatik/Religionsphilosophie/ Dogmengeschichte/neue Kirchengeschichte.

Note VII

Tholuck and Milligan

It would seem that it was Tholuck's attempt to interpret the meaning of the Incarnation within the intelligible world/sensible world dichotomy that left his construction of the doctrine open to the suspicion that accordingly the essence of the mind or reason of every-man is identified with the Logos and that the Incarnation served only as the occasion for man's being enabled to become conscious of this identification in an ultimate independence of Jesus Christ, the God-man. It would appear, too, that Tholuck was guilty of attempting to hold to what in essence is a binitarian doctrine of God, with love taking the place of God the Holy Spirit. In this way the Father and the Son tend to be regarded only in the dimension of God and the Word. Next, the Word is reduced to human reason; and finally, but inevitably, God Himself is subsumed under the autonomy of the subjective consciousness.

It is the belief of the writer that this conclusion concerning the theology of Tholuck receives support from F. Hollingworth Mitchell's doctoral thesis, The Hermeneutics of F. August Tholuck, A Study in the Methods of Biblical Interpretation. Indeed, there is so much in Dr. Mitchell's presentation of Tholuck's hermeneutics that has its parallel -- with a significant difference -- in the theology of William Milligan that it would be well to consider several points brought out in the thesis in relationship to the similar or contrasting features in Milligan's theology. In his thesis Dr. Mitchell makes the following points:

(1) Tholuck understood the history of Israel as the development of ideas.[1]

Milligan interpreted Christianity as the re-introduction through Christ of the principles contained in Genesis, and the fulfilment in Christ of the ideas of the mosaic economy.[2]

(2) Tholuck was influenced by Schleiermacher, who used Luther's dualism of the two worlds by giving it the form of a distinction between the sensuous and the spiritual, employing the same kind of distinction as did Origen, Augustine, Hugo of St. Victor, and others.[3]

Milligan made the most of this same distinction between the eternal, the spiritual, and the ideal on the one side and the temporal, the sensuous, and the actual on the other; but he subordinated the distinction within the present sovereign person of Jesus Christ, the Word become glorified flesh. This is made obvious in the fifth and sixth chapters of this thesis.

(3) Tholuck's apologetic interest in appealing to the cultured led him to follow Schleiermacher in stressing the importance of man's reason as the point of contact with the divine spark that is in every man.[4]

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1. F.H. Mitchell, The Hermeneutics of F. August Tholuck, A Study in the Methods of Biblical Interpretation, unpublished thesis, University of Edinburgh, New College, 1962, p. 25.
2. W. Milligan, The Decalogue and the Lord's Day, Wm. Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh, 1866; and "The Old Testament Fulfilled in the New", The Bible Educator, ed. E. Plumptre, Cassell, Petter and Galpin, London, 1873, eight papers, Vol. I, pp. 305, 341; Vol. II, pp. 42, 112, 170, 179, 273, 322, 365.
3. op.cit. Mitchell, pp. 39, 40.
4. Ibid. pp. 81, 82.

Milligan referred in more than one place to the divine spark that resides in every man's heart; it is this spark, he believed, that needs to be touched by the Spirit of Christ.[1]

(4) Tholuck's comment on John 1:4, 5 is quoted:

> "As the existence of beings has its root in the Logos, so has their life. This life, however, was in men a self-reflected life, a consciousness of God effectuated by self-consciousness."[2]

Tholuck had a tendency to draw man and God together in terms of consciousness. Another quotation from Tholuck corroborates this point:

> "...in men, in general, the Logos was divine consciousness as potential, but not yet come to energy in will or cognoscence; in Christ, the divine consciousness alike in will and cognoscence attains to absolute energy and therefore unites itself with the self-consciousness in personal unity."[3]

Milligan interpreted John 1:4, 5 as well as Rev. 4:11, in much the same way, but he did not use consciousness or God-consciousness as an ultimate category. For Milligan, Jesus Christ remained and will ever be the unique God-man, the eternal Son of God. Christ is much more than the one who fulfilled the archetypal idea of man. This is set forth in the fifth and sixth chapters of the present work.

(5) Tholuck interpreted the phrase, "to have life in Himself", of John 5:26 to mean, "He is Himself the principle of life". Tholuck

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1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, Macmillan, London, 1905, pp. 36, 37; The Resurrection of the Dead, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1894, p. 104; "The Revised New Testament", The Catholic Presbyterian, Vol. VI, London, 1881, p. 179.
2. Op.cit. Mitchell, p. 199.
3. Ibid. p. 199.

favoured this interpretation because of the analogies to this verse noted in John 4:14 and 7:38, which he understood to imply that for believers "the life received from Christ becomes an independent principle in them".[1]

The same point made in (4) applies here. Milligan interpreted John 5:26 as including the meaning, "He is Himself the principle of life", but he would never have agreed that Christ is no more than the one who enables the spark in every one to become a flame, only to withdraw the fire of His Holy Spirit in order that the now brightly burning flame in our hearts might burn independently of Him. According to Milligan, the truth is that the flame in the believer's heart must ever burn within the eternal Holy Spirit flaming forth from our Lord, who by becoming man and remaining the glorified man, continues, even now and forever, to sustain us. This, too, will become apparent in the final chapters.

(6) Tholuck was an exponent of textual criticism. However, though he was dissatisfied with the Received Text, he almost always followed it, as over against the other readings, thereby demonstrating a rather subjective bias.[2]

There is little doubt that, perhaps more so than his Scottish orthodoxy, what enabled William Milligan to resist the charms of a high-flown subjectivism was his willingness to submit himself to the preponderance of the objective documentary evidence. As is shown in Chapter four of this dissertation, Milligan sought and

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1. Ibid. p. 200.
2. Ibid. p. 153.

found the truly scientific principles of textual criticism not in Tischendorf, who tended to be swayed by a subjective bias, but in S.P. Tregelles, who allowed the evidence to preponderate in the formulation of those principles. In reference to the kind of prejudice that refuses to be conformed to the readings possessing the greatest weight of evidence, Milligan was to write in 1881:

> "The opinion which we have been combating appears to us the heresy of heresies in questions relating to the textual criticism of the New Testament. It cannot be too earnestly, too frequently, or too persistently maintained that we have no right to allow our own impression as to the meaning of a reading to overbear 'preponderance of evidence'. We are never safe except in endeavouring to ascertain God's will by the means which He Himself has given us for ascertaining it. These means in the present instance are evidence. It is what in every age has confused the evidence, and made it so much more uncertain and conflicting than it would otherwise have been. We may have many difficulties to encounter in submitting ourselves to the objective phenomena in a simple and childlike spirit; but we ought not at least to create our own difficulties, and, if we do not, the old ones may be expected gradually to disappear."[1]

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1. W. Milligan, "The Revised Version of the New Testament", The Christian Church, Vol. I, S. Partridge & Co., London, 1881, p. 277.

Note VIII

Background on Evidence and Rules of Evidence

Thomas Reid equated belief and judgment, which always is a belief in or judgment of something; and that something is always conceived. A belief or judgment, as expressed, is a proposition. Immediate sensations may suggest thought, but thought has to do with universals, which are conceivable.

> "Belief must have an object. For he that believes must believe something; and that which he believes, is called the object of belief. Of this object of belief he must have some conception, clear or obscure; for, although there may be the most clear and distinct conception of an object without any belief in its existence, there can be no belief without conception. Belief is always expressed in language by a proposition, wherein something is affirmed or denied...without belief there should be neither affirmation nor denial, nor should we have any form of words to express either. Belief admits of all degrees, from the slightest suspicion to the fullest assurance."[1]

What then is 'evidence' in the 'Common Sense' school? Reid stated:

> "We give the name evidence to whatever is the ground of belief. To believe without evidence is a weakness which everyman is concerned to avoid. Nor is it in a man's power to believe anything longer than he thinks he has evidence."[2]

There are different types of evidence in that there are different grounds of belief. There is the evidence afforded by our senses; there is the evidence given by testimony, which depends on the authority of someone else, whose memory and, of course, veracity are involved.

A distinct memory can be trusted because just as we are conscious

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1. T. Reid, Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man, ed. by A.D. Woozley, MacMillan & Co., London, 1941, p. 178.
2. Ibid. p. 178.

of what now exists, so do we remember what existed, for memory, also, must have an object. This can be so, for the reason that the object of both the senses and the memory is a universal, which in itself never changes.

This view of memory is, we may recall, part of the "Common Sense" answer to Hume's critique of belief in miracles. Hume's attack was aimed not directly at miracles themselves but at the validity of the testimony alleging miraculous events. The "Common Sense" answer was that trust in testimony is a law of our nature, that testimony is simply the spoken or written evidence of an eye-witness, and that miracles are just as much objects of sensible perception as any other events are. All events are viewed as effects; and, regardless of the cause (be it by immediate divine interposition or produced by the ordinary course of nature) an effect is an object of perception through man's senses. Therefore, a miracle can be the subject of testimony as well as any other event. The only modification of this whole procedure that Chalmers might have taught Milligan is that in answering Hume there is no need for an additional principle for man's belief in testimony, for testimony itself is reducible to the evidence of the senses. In any event, it is all a matter of evidence; and the examination of evidence is subject to the rules of procedure evolved through ordinary jurisprudence. This, at least, is how William Milligan viewed the matter. In handling the evidence not only of documents themselves but also of the documents' contents, one is called upon to exercise judgment guided by established rules and by the Spirit. Indeed the Church and the

individual Christian are necessarily called upon to exercise a judicial function, for:

> "God Himself is Judge. He hath given the Son authority to execute judgment because He is a Son of man (John V. 27). One of the promises of the Revelation of St. John to him that overcometh is, 'I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in his throne' (Chap. iii. 21); and we cannot forget the language in which St. Paul reproves the Corinthian Christians for their tendency to abdicate this solemn duty of their calling, 'Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world is judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that ye shall judge the angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?' (I Cor. VI. 2, 3)"[1]

And we can be sure that when Milligan spoke of the Christian duty of judging, he meant that to be judging on evidence:

> "Surely, if there is one thing more than another which conscience may be expected to demand, it is that before anyone is declared guilty, his offence shall be proved. 'At the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall a matter be established' (Deut. XIX.15). But then it must be 'established'. Why should witnesses be spoken of at all, or why should one witness be declared in the previous verse to be insufficient, if we may cast into the scale the weight of our own impressions? The sphere for the operation of 'conscience' is not to make that evidence which is no evidence, but to teach us to weigh evidence with the utmost impartiality, so that our verdict may be according to truth, in as far as truth can be known. Unknown, undiscovered truth does not belong to us, and we are not responsible for being guided by it."[2]

As one who judges by evidence a church court is not different from a lay court:

> "Proof must be laid before them of the same kind, and to the same degree, as in a lay criminal court. Evidence must be judged of on precisely the same principles, and so far as the facts are concerned, must be attended by the same conclusions in the one case as in the other. The members of a church

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1. W. Milligan, A Point in the Law of Libel, art. in The Scottish Church, S. Cowan & Co., Perth, Vol. II, Dec-May, 1886, p. 207.
2. Ibid. p. 209.

> court do not, in virtue of their being churchmen, possess more insight or more common sense than would belong to them were they laymen; and they must, therefore, be content to abide by the same rules and principles of judgment as those that guide lay judges."[1]

In regard to the development of the rules of evidence, which is a part of the law of procedure, it is pertinent to point out that its most definite and extensive development took place relatively late in the history of jurisprudence:

> "The English [the same could be said of the Scottish] law of evidence for the most part was built up by English judges in the course of the eighteenth century, and consists of this judge-made law, as modified by enactments of the nineteenth century."[2]

Evidence and trials, in the modern sense, were unknown to early Teutonic procedure. But it had its "proofs" and they were of two kinds: ordeals and oaths, and each of these were appeals to the supernatural. This kind of proof followed, instead of preceded judgment. There was no desire on the part of the court to hear or weigh conflicting testimony. To do so would have been asking of the court what it did not possess -- the exercise of its critical faculties.

The next development came about in France. The inquistio was decided upon the basis of popular opinion. In England "the spirit of the old accusatory procedure was applied to the new procedure by inquest."[3] There were two juries: the accusing jury and the deciding jury, the finding of the latter being based, not on its

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1. Ibid. p. 210.
2. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed. Vol. X, 1910, 11, p. 11.
3. Ibid. p. 11.

own knowledge, but upon the evidence submitted to it.

The next development occurred on the continent through the influence of Innocent III at the IVth Lateran Council, in which the new inquisitional procedure was introduced into canon law and was applied to cases of heresy; in such cases everything was done to secure conviction. However, in spite of its secrecy, unfairness, and torture this procedure by inquisition gradually made its way into the temporal courts. In connection with this inquisitional procedure the jurists of the continent "elaborated a theory of evidence, or judicial proofs, which formed the subject of an extensive literature."[1] Its rules were so high -- plena probatio was required -- that confession was necessary for conviction. This made torture essential. Nevertheless, "the rules of evidence attempted to graduate the weight to be attached to different kinds of testimony and almost to establish that weight in numerical terms."[2]

Modern criminal procedure was formulated in England in the eighteenth century. The first systematic treatise on "The Laws of Evidence" was published in 1761; and the author, Chief Baron Gilbert, was said to have been greatly influenced by John Locke, especially by that part of Locke's Essay concerning Human Understanding (Book IV, Ch. XV) dealing with the grounds of probability. Gilbert's work remained authoritative through the eighteenth century.

It was Jeremy Bentham's Rationale of Judicial Evidence (1802-1812)

1. Ibid. p. 12.
2. Ibid. p. 12.

(later edited by J.S. Mill, whose Logic was published in 1843) that brought about a basic change in the laws of evidence not only in Britain but on the continent. Bentham's basic principle was that the purpose of judicial evidence is the discovery of truth. He fought against the exclusion of much pertinent evidence. Specifically, certain classes of evidence have been disqualified on the ground of interest in the subject matter of the inquiry. Bentham argued for treating the interest of the witness as a matter relating to his credibility and not to his competency.

> "It was against this confusion of competency and credibility that Bentham directed his principal attack."[1]

We discern the relevance of all this to the testimony of Scripture, including the testimony to miracle. Chalmers himself, in his work on the evidence of Christianity, pointed out the absurdity of supposing that some brief mention of Christianity by a pagan writer has more evidential weight than the testimony of Scripture itself.

Pertinent, too, is the obvious influence of the Christian Church upon the development of the laws of evidence. Bentham himself was influenced by the teaching of Bishop Sanderson's Logic; and Sanderson had dealt with the evidence of Christianity. Indeed, a case might be made -- in the "Baconian spirit" -- that it was the Incarnation, culminating in the objective appearances of Christ Jesus to the disciples, that enabled man really for the first time to see what was before him, to become truly inductive and, through

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1. Ibid. p. 12.

the Holy Spirit, to submit to real evidence and to bear genuine testimony.

Be that as it may, we can understand that much of William Milligan's education and development took place within the relatively recent attempt to systematise and regulate the scientific handling of evidence as the ground for the determination of or guide to truth.

Note IX

A Modern Sample of the Swoon Theory

In a note on the "swoon" theory Milligan wrote:

> "The theory was adapted by Paulus, and became the favourite explanation of all the continental writers belonging to the school known as that of the Rationalismus Vulgaris. It is more remarkable that it should have been countenanced in late times by Hase ('Geschichte Jesu,' 112). The latter writer is disposed to ascribe the Resurrection to the wonderfully healing or restorative powers which resided in Jesus, and which, as they had often been exerted on others, so now were exerted on Himself."[1]

That the "swoon" theory is not dead is indicated by the adoption of a variation of it on the part of Mr. John Wren-Lewis in a lecture delivered in New College, University of Edinburgh, in 1964. According to Wren-Lewis, it was the inherent recuperative power of Jesus that enabled Him to survive the shock of what we call death. Jesus' death was as real as the death of any man, but His power of recuperation has shown us that death is a kind of fixation into which humanity has fallen but from which Christ has awakened us. In this especially specious attempt to explain away the resurrection of Christ from out of the dead, we discern but one more attempt to deny the reality of death itself; and thus viewed, resurrection may be seen as a returning to consciousness from a state of swoon.

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1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of Our Lord, Macmillan, 1905, note 35, p. 264.

Note X

Barth and the Resurrection

Karl Barth regards the resurrection of Christ as an objective (in a secondary sense), historical event, the chief value of which is to be found in its central revelatory character, but he seems to see little significance in the uniqueness of Christ's risen body as evidence of a further enhypostatic development of His human nature within the hypostatic union. Nor does Barth view the resurrection as having any apologetic significance.[1] It is indeed true what Jacques de Senarclens has written in his Heirs of the Reformation:

> "It is significant that in the course of the Church Dogmatics Barth increasingly diverges from Kierkegaard and turns more and more to the resurrection as the centre of the Gospel."[2]

But the more one turns to the resurrection as the centre of the Gospel the more difficult should it become to belittle its evidential value. Hermann Diem has written a very pertinent passage on this point:

> "Paul is here plainly attempting to authenticate the Gospel statement and the article of faith which he quotes --
>
> (XV.3) -- by reference to the statements of eye-witnesses, hence to affirm it as an historical fact. But why should he not do so, since the Resurrection, if it really happened, had eye-witnesses too? Here again we must keep at arm's length that modern purism, which out of sheer anxiety to avoid a mere fides historica, feels compelled to ignore the historical contours of revelatory events. Hence it appears to us both impossible and unnecessary when Barth denies that Paul here intended to adduce an historical proof, and when Bultmann, on the contrary, stresses that Paul in fact

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1. K. Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. IV, part 2, trans. G. Bromiley T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, pp. 140-144.
2. J. de Senarclens, Heirs of the Reformation, trans. and ed. G. Bromiley, S.C.M. Press, London, p. 183.

did just that, but thereby fell into self-contradiction. In our view one should accept Paul's argument as it stands, but notice at the same time what use Paul makes of his argument from history in what follows. What he is anxious to maintain is that the Gospel of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead implies our own resurrection from the dead (xv.12). His opponents certainly disputed the latter; whether they also disputed the former is doubtful. But the whole point is that both belong together. In order to show this, Paul argues, in the succeeding verses, e concessis, and says not only that in this case the whole historical factuality of the resurrection of Christ is useless to them, but that, if indeed his opponents are right, it cannot have happened at all (XV.16). The merely incidental nature of this whole historical method of demonstration cannot be more strongly brought out than Paul does in this instance."[1]

The above is in very close agreement with William Milligan's interpretation of the same passage:

"Such is the statement with which the Apostle opens the argument of this chapter (I Cor. xv). It is a statement of fact and an appeal to experience. There is undoubtedly proof presented of the fact that Christ rose from the grave. But there could be no proof by witnesses who could be seen and questioned that Christ was living still at the right hand of the Father an endless life of glory. For that the Corinthian Christians must depend upon positive assertion confirmed by undeniable experience of the result. Even the witnesses of the Resurrection of Christ are cited less as witnesses to prove a point, than as witnesses who tell an old story over again in order to revivify the convictions of their hearers. St. Paul is not dealing with sceptics as to the Resurrection of the Lord to whom it is necessary to present a proof, but with persons whose eyes were only becoming dim to it, and their hearts insensible to its influence. All, both Apostles and converts, are agreed upon one point, and have one point to start from. The Christ who had died and risen again, who had passed through death to life, was the substance of their common faith. Whether it was St. Paul himself or his fellow Apostles, so they preached, and so the Corinthians believed. Let the latter think over it again; and as they were even now persuaded of the truth itself, let them be prepared to follow it out, as they would follow out all truth, to the consequences which were legitimately involved in it."[2]

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1. H. Diem, Dogmatics, trans. H. Knight, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1959, pp. 124, 125.

2. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of the Dead, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1894, pp. 18, 19.

Perhaps one reason why William Milligan seems to have dealt with the "neologists" of his day (such as Strauss) in a more effective way than it appears that Karl Barth has been able to answer the neologists of his day (such as Bultmann) is that Milligan had entered deeply into the history, discipline, and principles of historical criticism as a means of handling historical evidence, whereas Barth, though having accepted the results of modern constructive criticism, may not have adequately familiarised himself with its discipline and thereby depreciated the value and principles of historical evidence and testimony as such.

Diem has written:

> "What makes their [those New Testament scholars who agree with Barth] acceptance of his position so difficult seems rather to be that Barth sets to work only after the conclusion of the canon, and assumes the latter to be a unified and closed dogmatic whole, which has its basis in a special moment of the Word of God and thus stands outside the factual estimates of historical criticism."[1]

Just as Kierkegaard, by regarding history as only the 'occasion' for revelation, reduced the weight of history -- and with it the history of 'the forty days' -- into the paradox of the revelatory 'moment', so it appears that Barth, by tending to abstract the canon from history and grounding it in "a special moment of the Word of God" has turned a blind eye to the <u>full</u> significance of the <u>evidence</u> of the history of 'the forty days'.

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1. H. Diem, op.cit. p. 62.

Note XI

Westcott, Hort and Milligan

It is likely that Milligan had been convinced of the correctness of the reading μονογενὴς θεός in John 1.18 by the scholarship of F.J.A. Hort, who was one of the most influential members of the New Testament section of the Revision Company. This Company, of which Milligan was a member, met many times over a period of about ten years in the Jerusalem Chamber of Westminster Abbey, beginning in 1870. Having been convinced earlier of the rightness of the principles of textual criticism as set forth by Tregelles, Milligan must have found himself in close accord with the Scriptural views and practice of both Westcott and Hort, for it was Hort who had carried on the work of Tregelles. Even before the publication of the Westcott-Hort text of the New Testament, the members of the New Testament section of the Translation Company had been given the opportunity of acquainting themselves with it.

In regard to the reading of John 1.18 Milligan wrote:

> "It is not possible in a commentary such as this to defend the reading which we here adopt, 'God' instead of 'Son'. But the passage is so extremely important that we may be permitted for once to depart from our usual practice of not referring to other writers, and to commend to our readers one of the finest critical Dissertations ever published in any language upon a reading of the New Testament. We refer to that by Dr. Hort of Cambridge upon this text (Macmillan 1876)."[1]

As an indication of Milligan's agreement with Hort's principles

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1. W. Milligan and W. Moulton, The Gospel of St. John, in A Popular Commentary on the Gospel of St. John and on The Acts of the Apostles, ed. P. Schaff, Vol. II, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1880, pp. 9, 10.

and practice of New Testament textual criticism we have an especially revealing account of Hort's influence on the New Testament Revision Company, contained in a memorial written by Milligan for publication in The Expository Times, in response to a request very probably made by Westcott:

> "Nothing but the request of one of his dearest and most universally honoured friends could tempt me to break, by any words of mine, the deep silence that now reigns around the grave of my beloved friend, Dr. Hort, in the Mill Road Cemetery, Cambridge."[1]

After referring to the work of Hort and Westcott on the New Testament text and of how the world of New Testament scholarship was turning to Hort's volume of Introduction to Westcott and Hort's Greek Text of the New Testament, Milligan went on to say:

> "Let me return to the Revision Company and look at Hort as he sits with many books of reference before, and some of the most bulky on a table behind him, at the south-west corner of the long table which occupies so much of the space of the Jerusalem Chamber. There are many men there of an ability and learning which might make the best scholar of the land hesitate to argue a point against them. But this minister of St. Ippolyts, for he was not a Professor till the Company was well on in its labours, has special knowledge, and he uses it with the self-possession, the boldness, the freedom, and yet withal with the simplicity and humility which marked all his presentations of what he believed to be the truth. No wonder that, backed as he was by Westcott and Lightfoot, he exercised an almost imperial sway in the formation of the text which the Company adopted. In addition, he brought also to the work of translation services of the most valuable kind, and lent no mean aid to the solution of many a difficult task of rendering into English such parts of the Greek text as, with all their unspeakably valuable services, former translators had failed to understand or express.
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> It was the same in everything. Whatever Dr. Hort did was thorough. Nothing would satisfy him but to probe to the bottom every difficulty that met him."[2]

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1. W. Milligan, "In Memoriam, Fenton John Anthony Hort, D.D., LL.D., D.C.L.," The Expository Times, Vol. IV, Oct. 1892-Sept. 1893, p. 174.
2. Ibid. pp. 175, 176.

In the very next volume of The Expository Times there was to appear a memorial on William Milligan, written by his close friend and collaborator, William Moulton, who had met Milligan at the beginning of the Revision work. Moulton's description of Milligan follows:

> "I seem to see him now, in the place which he almost invariably occupied at one end of the table which stretched the whole length of the Chamber (the end near the door), with Dr. Newth and the late Dean Scott on his left hand, and separated by one (myself) from Bishop Westcott on the right. He usually came unburdened with books of references, his one book being the Greek Testament. This he was wont to hold up near his eye, scanning the text from line to line, from word to word, with minute and careful scrutiny; he would then bend down to write the detailed notes which it was his habit to take of all our work. Beyond many others of the Revisers he had been a student of textual criticism, and...he was heartily in sympathy with the general strain of criticism which is associated with the names of Westcott and Hort. If we may adopt terminology now familiar, Dr. Milligan, from first to last belonged emphatically to the "Progressive" section of the Company. As was most natural (and, we will add, most desirable), conservative instincts held great power over many of the members and appeared largely in our very numerous discussions on points of detail... Yielding to none in reverence for Holy Scripture, as the inheritance of learned and unlearned alike in Christ's Church and Kingdom, Dr. Milligan felt deeply and maintained strongly that such reverence was most fitly shown by a strenuous effort to make the English version a faithful and true presentation of the meaning conveyed by the original text. He feared lest the power of habit should lead him astray, and the witchery of familiar words blind him as a translator to any intimation of the inspired writer's thought. Hence his very manner and gesture, in the meetings of the Company, were those of a student who, however thorough might have been his preparatory labours, sought to look anew at each familiar sentence in the concentrated light of the present moment [my emphasis] of investigation and debate. No reader of his various works will be surprised to hear that many a particular which to many might seem to be of smaller consequence, as belonging to the colouring which cannot be transferred from language to language rather than to substance and essential form, appeared (and in many cases, as I think rightly appeared) to Dr. Milligan both interesting and important for our work of translation. And yet it must not for a moment be supposed that he spoke very frequently, or often pressed minutiae upon the attention of his colleagues. I have

been rather taking his occasional utterances as illustrating some aspects of his mind. If I may trust my memory, and a note-book which alas! has many lacunae, I should say that he occupied comparatively little time in the discussion. No one could be more free from the smallest appearance of dogmatism. Genial, modest, with winning and persuasive manner, he would quietly set his views before the Company, catching up perhaps, as he sat down, some kindly words of doubt or dissent with a smile, and a gently uttered 'Do you think so?'"

"To know Dr. Milligan was to love him; and on myself the attraction of his personality was very great. A more than brotherly union between us began very early and lasted with undiminished closeness through the twenty-three years which followed."[1]

1. W. Moulton, "In Memoriam, The Rev. William Milligan, D.D.", The Expository Times, Vol. V. Oct. 1893-Sept. 1894, p. 250.

Note XII

Milligan's Idealism and John Wyclif

There is not the least doubt that Milligan's theology is informed by what might be called the Platonic, Philonic, Alexandrian, Augustinian tradition. We have seen that with all the emphasis on induction in the "Common Sense" school, induction was intended as a method of arriving at universals, truths, ideas of reality. We have considered that even in the true, Baconian induction the purpose is to arrive, by the method of exclusion, at the true forms inherent in nature -- induction itself having been grounded in the Incarnation. On the continent in the tutelage of the Neander-Tholuck-Müller School Milligan was even more influenced by the Platonic, Augustinian tradition. It is indeed true that for Milligan this idealism (or realism, depending on the perspective from which we interpret these words) had been baptised into the risen Lord, but it was nonetheless an idealism which he professedly found in the Scriptures.

Unless, of course, Milligan had not believed that he had found an idealism in the Bible -- which he accepted as the only rule of faith and practice -- he would not have retained it in his theology. But that he believed he had discovered a Biblical idealism is manifest throughout his writings. It was in the Gospel according to John, the Apocalypse, Colossians, and the Epistle to the Hebrews that Milligan believed he had found an idealism most emphatically set forth in the New Testament -- especially so in the following verses: John 1. 3,4 ("That which hath come into being was life in

him", a rendering, according to Milligan, favoured by almost all -- if not all -- the Greek Fathers of the first three centuries and, incidentally, favoured by Westcott); Rev. 4.11 ("Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy pleasure they were, and they were created".); Col. 1.16, 17 ("In Him were all things created", and "in Him all things subsist".); and Hebrews 8.5 ("They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary; for when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, 'See that you make everything according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain'."). In these verses and others Milligan believed he saw grounds for a Biblical realism (in the older sense); everything that has been created had a prior life in God.

This belief in a Biblical idealism was enforced by Milligan's reading of the writings of John Wyclif, with whom, of all the Church Fathers, he seemed to agree most. It would seem that in Wyclif Milligan found an "ideal" mentor, one who himself had been especially influenced by the writings of the Apostle John. Wyclif was a student and translator of the Bible, a man of principles, and a Church reformer. What can be stated with certainty is that the basic framework of Milligan's theology is very close indeed to that of the Reformer. In Milligan's article on Wyclif, "John Wyclif and the Bible", we find an identification of what Milligan called idealism with the older realism and the location of the key verse in John's Gospel.

The aim of Milligan's essay was

> "...to grasp the fundamental elements of his character and guiding principles of his life, and to determine the most important lesson which he left behind him, both for his own and succeeding times."[1]

Wyclif was

> "...not merely a theologian but [was] widely acquainted with the science of his day --: mathematics, chemistry, optics, natural history...an unquestioned master in scholastic disputation ranked with Scotus, Ockham, and Bradwardine as one of the four great Schoolmen of the fourteenth century."[2]

Wyclif, though no slave to them, was a diligent student of the Fathers. He spoke and thought for himself; and though he laboured under the difficulties of the scholastic method, for that very reason he had contact with his time. Even though a man of his time,

> "...no man did more to introduce a brighter sunshine and a healthier atmosphere into the modes of thought and exposition which had ruled till his time with almost undisputed sway."[3]

Wyclif was noted for the purity of his life and took seriously his responsibility as a priest.

> "By nothing, however, was he in all probability so much fitted for his work as by the deliberate and exhaustive manner in which he first surveyed his ground, and then by the coolness, not less than the resoluteness, with which he occupied it."[4]

The fundamental, the guiding principle of Wyclif's life and work was his Christianity; his religious principles and aims did far more to determine what he was than the aspirations of a merely

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1. W. Milligan, "Wyclif and the Bible", The Fort-nightly Review, Vol. XXXVII, new series, Jan. 1 - June 1, 1885, p. 788. In this article Milligan made reference to Lecher's John Wycliffe and His English Precursors.
2. Ibid. p. 788. This quotation indicates that Milligan himself had more than a slight acquaintance with the schoolmen.
3. Ibid. p. 788.
4. Ibid. p.790.

patriotic heart. It was during his years of training at Oxford, previous to 1366, that the seed was sown, and the seed was the Word of God. He was the "Evangelical Doctor", and this term "...meant then the doctor devoted to the Scriptures in contrast with all other teaching".[1]

But -- and this indicates the in-depth study that Milligan had made of Wyclif's writings -- it is not enough to say that Wyclif was a close student of the Bible.

> "...a key to Wyclif's life, that has not yet been used, is, that in his study of Scripture he would seem to have come powerfully under the influence of St. John."[2]

In fact in John 1.3, 4 we find

> "...the germ of all his views...In both the Authorised and Revised versions the translation, with an unimportant difference, is as follows:-
> 'And without Him was not anything made that hath been made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of man'. Wyclif connects the clauses differently, and translates 'And without Him was not anything made. That which hath been made was life in Him; and the life was the light of men'. ...Wyclif was right. He has followed the early fathers, and has apprehended the real meaning of the words. What St. John tells us is, that the Eternal Word was life, life absolutely and therefore life that would communicate itself; that He was the fountain of all life; and that in Him principally was the life of every creature before it was called into existence. The teaching will be better understood if we compare the words of the Gospel with those of the song of the four-and-twenty elders in the Apocalypse; 'Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honour and the power; for Thou hast created all things, and because of Thy will they <u>were</u> and they were created'. All things were before they were created. In other words, it is St. John's principle appearing alike in the fourth Gospel and in the Apocalypse, that in God, and, if in God, therefore also in the Word to whom the Father, who hath life in Himself gave to have life in Himself (Jn.5.26), there is an eternal pattern of all things that are realised on earth. By this pattern

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1. Ibid. p. 790.

2. Ibid. p. 790.

> must all things on earth be judged, and to it all of them must, as far as possible be conformed. This is the idealism of St. John, and Wyclif caught the inspiration. Here then we seem to obtain the key to most at least of what Wyclif both was and did -- to his philosophical system; his work as a reformer of ecclesiastical abuses; his views on property, so often misunderstood and harshly judged; and even to his method of reasoning upon any point he had in hand.
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> Let us look for a moment at the last point first, and the Reformer's idealism at once explains to us why he should always, in reasoning, go back to first principles. It is often in no small degree burdensome to the reader to find the commonest question discussed from the most remote and far-drawn considerations as to the nature of God and the eternal relations existing between Him and His creatures. But how can Wyclif argue otherwise? He can only deal with existing things by comparing them with the pattern in the Mount. He must reach that 'one first' which is the measure of all others (In omni genere est unum primum quod est metrum et mensura omnium aliorum).
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> It is well known that he was a Realist, and this harmonises exactly with what has been said, for the Realists, as distinguished from the Nominalists, believed that generals or universals have an existence prior to, and independent of, the individual objects of which they relate. In the words of the scholastic philosophy they were universalia ante rem.
>
> Thus Wyclif felt, and far more interesting, accordingly, in this point of view than any, even the most memorable, of his overt acts is the principle upon which he proceeded."[1]

There are so many points on which Milligan's view was identical to that of Wyclif that -- in addition to Milligan's explicit and avowed agreement with and admiration of him -- this makes it almost certain that Milligan had seriously studied his writings and learned from him. Milligan was in agreement with Wyclif on, at least, the following matters: the relation of Church and State; the authority and sufficiency of the Word of God, the centrality of Christ, the God-man, and the importance and relevance of His glorified human nature; the ideal existence of all creatures in the intelligible realm prior to their actual existence in time; the importance of

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1. Ibid. pp. 790, 791, 792.

beginning with principles and seeking for the ideal meanings of words and propositions; the conception of property; the Divine dominion, the dominion of grace; the importance of distinctness, clarity and logical exactness; the identity, in Scripture and in the early Church, of presbyters and bishops; the holding of both predestination and free will; and the doctrine of the Church.[1]

In regard to the last mentioned subject, the nature of the Church, Milligan followed (or agreed with) Wyclif, as against the teaching of the Westminster Confession; and in this we see the relationship between the ideal and the real brought out. The visible Church on earth is a part of the real Church, and the elect within the "outward" Church are the true kernel of the Church. The Westminster Confession of Faith, in Chapter XXV, made a mistake according to Milligan, in speaking of the visible and the invisible Church:

> "Our thoughts are thus divided between: what is ideal but cannot be realised on earth, and what is realised on earth but must always be actual, not ideal."[2]

Milligan agreed with Wyclif in holding the following analogy: the inner circle of believers (the essence of the Church) is to the outward, professing, visible Church as Christ the glorified Redeemer is to Christ in his state of humiliation; it is the duty of the inner circle of the Church to take her Master's place in the world and do His work. This inner circle of the Church has an ideal standing in the heavenly places and desires only to walk more

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1. See Lecher, John Wycliffe and His English Precursors, translated by P. Lorimer, The Religious Tract Society, London, 1884.
2. W. Milligan, "Wyclif and the Bible", p. 793.

worthily of it.

As an indication of Milligan's estimating the value of Wyclif's writings, we read:

> "In proceeding upon these principles the great Reformer of the fourteenth century laid down lines which even the Reformers of the sixteenth century did not see with equal clearness, and which are not fully comprehended to this day...all of them may be traced to the operation of the same great principle, of the same ideal view of the position and privilege of the true members of Christ's Church on earth -- the ideal system which he [Wyclif] discovered in the New Testament."[1]

William Milligan's idealism was the same idealism he had found in the writings and life of John Wyclif; and Milligan believed this idealism to be scriptural. Milligan had discerned

> "the working of a high New Testament idealism as the chief guiding principle of Wyclif's life. He has been upon the Mount with God, and his great aim is to find as far as possible practical expression for the pattern that had been shown him there."[2]

Commenting in another place on Rev. 4.11 Milligan wrote:

> "Part of the song of the four-and-twenty elders, when they celebrate in Chap. iv, the glory of Him that sat upon the throne, is in the following words, -- 'Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they were (not, as in the Authorised Version, "are",) and were created'. They 'were', and they 'were created'. How could they be before they were created? One explanation alone is possible. God knew what He would make before He made it. There exists in the Divine mind an eternal type of everything that is called into existence. There is a pattern in the Mount after which each pin of the tabernacle is fashioned. There is an ideal before there is an actual."[3]

Milligan found this idealism in the writings of Paul, too --

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1. Ibid. p. 794.
2. Ibid. p. 795.
3. W. Milligan, Lectures on the Apocalypse, Macmillan, London, 1892, pp. 119, 120. At this point Milligan quoted Augustine: "For he was not ignorant of what he was about to create when he did create. No accession to His knowledge comes from His creatures to Him, nor did He know them after He had created them in any other way than before; but they existing when, and as, was meet, His knowledge remained as it was".

even if he had to read between the lines. In commenting on I. Cor. 15.46, he wrote:

> "We then have brought before us in a concrete form the essential relations of things to one another. And, had St. Paul pursued this thought further, he might have added, No wonder that it should be so, for all things must be moulded upon the pattern which has existed from eternity in the Divine Mind."[1]

The ideal precedes the actual, but, within the actual, within existence, that which is apprehended by the senses precedes that which -- even though it be a body -- is apprehended by the Spirit. Continuing from the last quotation:

> "Where then may that pattern be best seen? Surely nowhere so well as in the contrast between the first and last Adam. The first Adam begins the history of humanity; the last Adam carries it to its consummation. Compare the two with one another, and you will at once learn by the comparison that the sensuous precedes the spiritual, that the limitations of the earthly come before the freedom of the heavenly. What was the case in the history of the first and last Adam must find its reflection in us. We have no ground of complaint that only in the future shall we possess the spiritual and heavenly body."[2]

It was, of course, in the Epistle to the Hebrews that Milligan found an idealism in so many words. It was an idealism that had been realised in Christ, but it was an idealism nonetheless. For several years before he died Milligan had been making a special study of the Epistle to the Hebrews and had finished a first draft of a commentary on the Epistle, undertaken at the behest of the publishers of the International Critical Commentaries. Two articles on "The Pattern on the Mount" were published in The Thinker in 1893, Milligan's last year; therein he dealt specifically with the covenants with

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1. W. Milligan, The Resurrection of the Dead, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1894, p. 175.
2. Ibid. p. 175.

Israel and their fulfilment in Jesus Christ.

The idealism of the Epistle is seen especially in Chapter 8.5:

> "The lesson to be deduced from these particulars is confirmed by the remarkable statement of Chap. viii. 5, in which the words of the Almighty to Moses are quoted: 'Even as Moses is warned of God when he is about to make a tabernacle: for see, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern that was showed thee in the Mount'. It is impossible to enter here into any discussion as to the precise way in which this 'pattern' is to be thought of, and it is unnecessary to do so. The general meaning can hardly be disputed. The Mosaic Dispensation was to be founded on the eternal purpose of God with regard to man. It was to express this, so far as it could be expressed, by means of outward materials and arrangements; and so far as Israel was at a stage to apprehend it. The purpose and the ideas with which it was connected belonged, indeed, fully to the covenant of God as realised in the new covenant, but they existed under the old covenant and had a certain manifestation of it."[1]

Milligan was not unacquainted with "...the writings of the great Alexandrian philosopher Philo".[2] It is solely to Philo, apart from the Old Testament and the Targums, that Milligan referred for a proper understanding of the meaning of "'the Word' (Logos)" in the commentary on John 1.1:

> "In these [the writings of Philo] the doctrine of the Divine Word holds a prominence which it would be hard to exaggerate. Yet from the multitude of passages in which Philo speaks of the attributes and actions of the Word, it is impossible to deduce with any certainty a clear statement of doctrine. Now the Word seems distinctly personal, now an attribute of God personified. In some passages the ideal can be traced back to the thought of 'spoken word'; in many others Philo takes up the other meaning of the Greek word Logos, viz. reason. Hence, though Philo speaks of the universe as created through the Logos yet in other passages the Logos is the design or the idea of creation in the mind of God."[3]

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1. Milligan, "The Pattern on the Mount", The Thinker, 1893, p. 378.
2. Milligan and Moulton, The Gospel of St. John, op.cit. p.3.
3. Ibid. p. 3.

We have an insight into Milligan's conception of 'the Word' in his emphasis on thought as over against the spoken word:

> "This first verse takes us beyond the region of revelation to man: when 'in the beginning' beyond the limits of time, 'the Logos was', the thought of 'speech' ceases to give us any help towards grasping the meaning; and, if we may venture to interpret the term at all in this application, we can only think of the human analogy by which we pass from the uttered word to the thought or reason of the speaker."[1]

At this point we have another and fuller commentary on John 1.3b:

> "That which hath come into being was life in him...Created being was 'life in Him'. He was life, life absolutely, and therefore the life that can communicate itself, -- the infinitely productive life, from whom alone came to every creature, as He called it into being, the measure of life that it possesses. In Him was the fountain of all life; and every form of life, known or unknown, was only a drop of water from the stream which, gathered up in Him before, flowed forth at His creative word to people the universe of being with the endlessly multiplied and diversified existences that play their part in it. It is not of the life of man only that John speaks, still less is it only of that spiritual and eternal life which constitutes man's true being. If the word 'life' is often used in this more limited sense in the Gospel, it is because other kinds and developments of life pass out of view in the presence of that life on which the writer especially loves to dwell. The word itself has no such limitation of meaning, and when used, as here, without anything to suggest limitation, it must be taken in its most comprehensive sense. It was in the Word, then, that all things that have life lived; the very physical world, if we can say of its movements that they are life, the vegetable world, the world of the lower animals, the world of men and angels, up to the highest angel that is before the throne. Ere yet they came into being, their life was in the Word who, as God, was life, and from the Word they received it when their actual [my emphasis] being began. The lesson is the same as that of Col. 1.16, 17, 'In Him were all things created', and 'in Him all things subsist'; or, still more, of Rev. iv.11, 'Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy pleasure they were' (not 'are' as in the Authorised Version,) 'and they were created'."[2]

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1. Ibid. p. 3.
2. Ibid. p. 4.

Thus far, and through verse 5, St. John is interpreted as referring to the pre-incarnate Logos. He continued with the commentary on God's special relationship to man; and herein we detect the reason for Milligan's several times writing of "the spark of the divine life" in the soul of everyman:

> "And the life was the light of men. From the wide thought of all created existences, the Evangelist passes in these words to the last and greatest of the works of God, man, whose creation is recorded in the first chapter of Genesis. All creatures had 'life' in the Word; but this life was to man something more than it could be to others, because he had been created after a fashion, and placed in a sphere, peculiar to himself amidst the different orders of animated being. God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness' (Gen. i, 26). Man was thus capable of receiving God, and of knowing that he had received Him; he had a sphere and a capacity belonging to none of the lower creatures spoken of in the great record of creation; his nature was fitted to be the conscious abode, not of the human only, but of the divine. Hence the Word could be in him as in no other creature. But the Word is God (ver. 1), and 'God is light' (I John i.5). Thus the Word is 'light' (comp. ver. 7); and as man was essentially fitted to receive the Word, that Word giving life to all found in him a fitness for the highest and fullest life, -- for 'light' therefore, in its highest and fullest sense; and 'the life was the light of men'."[1]

It is thus man's very nature to receive the divine and to be conscious of it. Man was made for a unique relationship to God. Therefore there must be not only an external but also an internal witness and response to the truth as it is in Jesus. Even though clouded and dulled by the Fall there is still that spark in man's inner being, and he is responsible in regard to the way he reacts to the Spirit and to the God-man.

> "The idea of human nature thus set forth in these words ('and the life was the light of men') is peculiarly remarkable, and worthy of our observation, not only as a complete answer to those who bring a charge of Manichaean dualism against the Fourth Gospel, but also to enable us to comprehend its teaching

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1. Ibid. p. 4.

> as to human responsibility in the presence of Jesus. 'The life'; it is said, 'was the light of men'; not of a class, not of some, but of all the members of the human family as such. Man's true nature, it is said, is divine [my emphasis]; divine in this respect also, as distinguished from the divine in all creation, that man is capable of recognising, acknowledging, seeing the divine in himself. The 'life' becomes 'light' in him, and it does not become so in lower creatures. Man's true life is the life of the Word; it was so originally, and he knew it to be so. If, therefore, he listens to the tempter and yields to sin (whose existence is admitted simply as a fact, no attempt being made to account for it,) man corrupts his true nature, and is responsible for doing so. But his fall cannot destroy his nature, which still testifies to what his first condition was, to what his normal condition is, to what he ought to be. Man, therefore, only fulfils his original nature by again receiving that Word who is to offer Himself to him as 'Word become flesh'. But if man's receiving of the Word be thus the fulfilling of his nature, it is his duty to receive Him; and this duty is impressed upon him by his nature, not by mere external authority. Hence the constant appeal of Jesus in this Gospel, not to external evidence only, but to that remaining life of the Word within us [my emphasis], which ought to receive the Word completely, and to hasten to the light (com. ver. 9)."[1]

Such was William Milligan's idealism, an idealism he believed he had found in the Bible.

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1. Ibid. pp. 4, 5.

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